

FOOD SAFETY AND SECURITY IN INDIA –A STUDY

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I ABSTRACT

This paper examines the role of food security in sustainable economic as well as human development. It says that there is a close interlink between food security and socio economic development of the country. India's food security is related to the resources and means of having access to the stock powers of food gains. Lack of food is due to the lack of means to acquire it. The main challenge to food security comes mainly from slow growth of purchasing power of the people rather than food availability. There is a need to rejuvenate Indian agricultural sector which is the backbone of the Indian economy. Neoliberal policies as well as the failures of the policies of the government are also responsible for the emergence of food insecurity.

Keyword: Food security, food availability, food agriculture, food accessibility.

II INTRODUCTION

A Time would come when growing population would run out of available food and would starve and face Famine after famine" That would be the end of the humanity.

Indian economy is witnessing a transformational progress with gross domestic product growing at an average of 8 percent per year. But the question ahead is whether this growth is able to sustain for a long run or the economy has impressing aggressive economic growth. Development is, above all, a human process and not just a mechanical or technological change it is the development of people. The goal of development is to enrich the quality of life. In Indi, its high economic growth rate has been failed to improve internal food security, there is a growing internal insecurity with the emergence of a sense of food insecurity, leaving the country to face a crisis in its real economy. The problem is more severe because a large proportion of the population is already malnourished and thereby more prone to debilitating illness and inability to achieve normal growth. India's nutrition indicators are among the lowest in the world. Nearly half of all India's children are underweight, and half suffer from anemia. This is worse than all countries in sub-Saharan Africa (jayathighosh). About 41% of the world's underweight children are the future human resources capital of the country Though India is one of the largest producers of the food grains in the world, yet nearly 300 million people still struggle to meet two squares meals a day and 21percent of the population are malnourished (International Food Policy Research Institute, 2011). According to the International food policy research institute's 2010 Hunger Index, India ranks 67th in a list out of 88 countries. The GHI ranks countries on a scale of 100, with 10 being the best score and 100 the worst. It is composed of three equally weighted indicators the proportion of undernourished in the population, the prevalence of those underweight in children under five and the under-five mortality rate. The food insecurity is so rampant across the country that India is clubbed with minor economies like Bangladesh, Timor-Lest and Yemen, recording the highest Prevalence of underweight in children under five.

III LEVEL OF MALNUTRITION

- Nutrition is important to ensure proper brain formation and development, which starts in the womb. Under- nutrition as a silent emergency haunts the lives of millions of Indian children. Close to two million children below the age of 5 die in India every year.
- Nearly 45% of children below five suffer from malnutrition.
- India is in the sixth position in a global poll that ranks countries where children are most vulnerable.
- Nearly half of the world's hunger and malnourished children are in India.
- Four children dying every minute due to starvation.
- One third of our newborns' weight below WHO cut off of 2.5 kg.
- As per NFHS 2 (1998-99) 47% & NFHS 3 (2005) 45.9% Children below 3 years are underweight. Undernourished 22% (2004-06)
- Under weight in children under five 43.5% (2003-8)

These give India a composite GHI of 24.1, which is classified as alarming in terms of food security. The term 'food security' entered the broader development policy debate at the 1974 World Food Conference, The most common definition today was first launched at the World Food Summit in 1996. At the World Summit of Food Security in 2009, this definition was reconfirmed, and the concept was extended and specified by adding that the "four pillars of food security are availability, access, utilization, and stability" and stated that "the nutritional dimension is integral to the concept. The concept of food security is well-suited to facilitate the discussion and guide action on promising pathways out of hunger and malnutrition.

IV FOOD AGRICULTURAL ORGANIZATION

Food security and agricultural an implies "A situation that exists when all people, at all the lots of times, have physical, social and economic access public to get the sufficient, safe and nutritious food are health and wealth that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

V FOOD AS A RIGHTPATH

Right to food enshrines freedom from hunger and malnutrition as a fundamental right. The right to be free from hunger and malnutrition is recognized under the international covenant on economic, social and cultural rights and the universal declaration on the eradication of hunger and malnutrition. Right to food includes the production, processing, distribution, marketing and consumption of safe food, as well as parallel measures in the fields of health, education, employment and social security. The Right to food is an essential part of the right to life under the article 21 of the Indian constitution.

VI BASICALLY FOOD SECURITY HAS FOUR COMPONENTS

- Food availability: it depends on food production.
- Food accessibility: it depends on purchasing power
- Food Absorption: is a function of safe drinking water, primary health care & education & also environmental hygiene.
- Food Stability: it depends on maintaining price stability.

VII FOOD AVAILABILITY

Food Availability means existence of sufficient stocks of food to meet demand. Demand and supply prospects of food items become important indicators to the country's food security concerns. The apparent imbalance between food demand and supply is essentially because of the shortfall in supply. India being an agricultural background country, the performance of agriculture is important for arability as well as access to food as more than 52 per cent of total work forces till dependent on this sector. Populations are new trends of project in India to emerging new ideas as the most popular country in the world. The demand for food has been primarily driven by growth in population and income. The rate of agricultural production has increased over the successive years. India achieved self-sufficiency by mid-seventies itself. The production rose more than three times since 1950s. Food grain production in the 1960s increased about 20 million tonnes a year on an average. The average annual rise of Production was about 27 million tonnes in the 1970s over the 1960s and more than 37million tonnes the 1980s.Total food grain production in 2010-11 estimated at 232.07 million tones. Though the food grain increased in successive years, food grain has not been able to keep pace with the increase in population. With raised mismatch between food grain productions as well as rise in the rate of population the per capita availability has gone down from 475.5 grams per person per day in the 1990s to 444.6grams last decade .This shows the per capita consumption of poorest section is far below the recommended level. For instance Annual increase in agricultural production has been at 2.5% in the period between 1950-51-2006-07, which is higher than the population growth of 2.1% during the same period. But it is reversed during 1990-2007, in which food grain production has declined to 1.2% while population has increased at 1.9% rate. Agricultural growth has decelerated from 3.5 percent during 1981-1997 to 2 percent during 1997-2005(MahendraDev.s, 2012) past trends in production of selected food items and their average annual growth rates in India (1980-2006/07) as well as outside the India (2006-07) decreased.

The above statistics indicate that the total production as well as the annual growth rate of some selected food items has decreased over the decades in India and also the global production trends are quite similar to that of India. Mainly Rice, wheat and sugar which are turned negative, pulses as well as cereals production too reduced. This shows that farmers are moving away from Traditional food staples. The world food organization affected is very serious today with food riots reported from many countries like Egypt, Cameroon, Haiti, and Barkina Faso, Nigeria etc. If the food grain situation doesn't improve then the food riots may spread too their countries. This shows that shortage of food is a global problem; there is no chance to relay on import of food grains. Since Imports can help in improving the country's supply situation only for a short term, but for the long term the country will need to focus on productivity enhancement, through enhancing public Investment, which was declined over the years. For instance the share of Agriculture's Gross capital formation of GDP declined from 2.2% in late 1990s to 1.7%(2004-05) (MaithreyiKrishnaraj, 2006). According to a FAO report aid to agriculture has dropped to 4.3% of total assistance in 2008 from 18% in 1979. This shows that in the new liberal era it remained neglected. This would suggest that to ensure adequate food for all, the production of food grains itself has to be increased.

VIII LAND AS WELL AS CROP DIVERSIFICATION

It is a period of transition for Indian agriculture. The size of land utilized for agriculture purpose is shrinking. The per capita availability of cultivable land has gradually diminished from 0.4 hectare in 1951 to 0.20 hectare in 1981 and further down to 0.51 hectare in 2001 E.g.: in HP, Orissa, Bihar, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu etc. Share of land under non-agricultural utilization has gone up from 7.8% to 8.5% during the same period. For instance, in the seven years between 2000-01 and 2007-08, the total land utilization has increased by 4.9 lakh hectares; the area under non-agricultural use has increased 20.3 lake hectares. (Non-agricultural use includes all land occupied by buildings, roads & railways under water, canals etc.). And also the share of net sown area in total reporting area has declined from 46.3% (2000-01) of 46.1% (2007-08) (tusharkantimahanti) Indian agricultural sector is also, witnessing crop diversification with acreage diversification. In recent years, this has been diversified towards high value crops(non-food crops) & also diversification from traditional foods which are rich in nutrients or from low priced food grain cultivation to relatively more remuneration crops as well, which may adversely affect food security. In the mean time at the global level, the high global price of oil leads to large scale diversion of grains to ethanol production in advanced countries. Increased area under bio-fuel crops is also resulting in gap between demand and supply of food grains. Mainly cereals, sugar cane, maize, vegetables are the major food staples used in ethanol production. USA, Brazil, Cuba, South Africa, Japan, Mexico, Australia etc. are the major countries which are ahead in this race. For instance in 2006 US diverted more than 20% of its maize production to the production of ethanol, Brazil used half of its sugarcane production to make Bio-fuel and used greater part of its vegetable oil production as well as imported vegetable oils to make bio fuel. This has naturally reduced the availability of land for producing food grains. Along with acreage and crop diversification for bio-fuel production, raising costs of inputs, falling productivity, inadequate public investment in agricultural research, and also the impact of climate changes that have affected harvests in different ways.

IX FOOD ACCESSIBILITY

The current problem could not be slowed only through addressing the crisis of Agricultural production alone; at the same time there is a need to stimulate purchasing power among the poor. There is enough food in the country for everyone to be adequately feed, but almost half of the population unable to access enough food to meet their needs. So the crucial problem in India is inadequate supply of food for the person has been dramatically worsened by the lack of Purchasing power of a significant proportion of the population. Higher GDP growth in post-reform period failed to improve workers' economic access. As Prof. AmartyaSen has cautioned YojanaBhavan that unless the benefits of growth are distributed horizontally, the rich-poor divide in the country will widen further leading to increasing social unrest. In fact he has demonstrated that the Bengal Famine Of 1943 was caused not because of scarcity of food grains alone but due to lack of purchasing power that people starved to death. Neo-liberal politics have attacked both production and access far farmers, on attack on their production is an attack on their incomes & decline in growth of laborers get employed as well.

X CONCLUSION

The study about the food security and safety measurement to the sum up, chronic food insecurity which is rampant in India is primarily associated with chronic poverty and due to inadequate dietary system. The reason for today's starvation not only the scarcity of food grains alone, but also the lack of purchasing power what Amartya calls this the failure of exchange entitlement. This lack of purchasing power is the main reasons for decreasing demand for food grains, which are rooting in government go downs. To restore Purchasing power government should concentrate on long term oriented development programs other then vote bank policy oriented short term policy. However, India is still at an early stage of transitional growth. Current ongoing Indian structural changes should be redirected towards creating high valued jobs in Non-formal sectors which are the engines of future economic growth. There is an urgent need to create quality employment for inclusive growth process. At the same time, the government should realize that the over sterilization is not going to solve the problems of a highly populated nation. There is a need to rejuvenate Indian agricultural sector which is the backbone of the Indian economy. Technology may be a kingpin of solutions. Everyone in the country should be entitled with adequate amount of food; otherwise the purpose of the welfare state would be survived. It has to be remembered that nothing can substitute human hunger and once hunger goes beyond a point then the whole democratic system will not survive.

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