

A CRITICAL LITERATURE REVIEW OF THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF COMMUNITY BASED EFFORTS TO DEAL WITH FOOD SECURITY IN INDIA- A SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MUMBAI

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ABSTRACT

Food insecurity has been a persistent dilemma that has been faced by India for several decades. This plaguing issue has been addressed from a wide variety of angles and several potential and implementation-based approaches have also been determined. However, the lack of united efforts is the key concern. The solution to the problem of the distribution and economic accessibility of food can be seen to be addressed in several cohesive communities through the system of community kitchens. In this particular paper, a seminal literature review has been presented which addresses the key aspects of food security concepts and also provides evidence for community kitchens and how they can actually bring about positive change in society to deal with the ongoing challenges that our country faces on the grounds of food insecurity.

Keywords: Food security, community kitchens, India, social security, economic security

CRITICAL APPRAISAL OF LITERATURE

One of the most essential components of research work is to conduct a literature review. It comprises secondary literature sources people have written from across the globe on the topic. This review of literature is considered to be one of the most important aspects of the study as it will help identify several important concepts helps identify areas of gap in research, and also helps to justify the course of action that research undertakes.

A literature review that is comprehensive, precise, concise, and transparent is considered to be ideal research. The literature review needs to provide the reader with a theoretical base, it provides a survey of published works that deals with the investigation that has been conducted and an analysis of that work is presented. The literature review provides for factual data that has been collected over a period of time before and it is not the place where a researcher will provide for information that they might have collected. The review of literature will provide for a base on which the accepted knowledge on the concerns of economics are properly built.

It is not the summarization of resources that is required under the review of the literature but rather synthesis, analysis, and critical evaluation of the data that has been provided earlier. The key component here is to critically evaluate to identify the limitations and weaknesses in the study so that one can identify what efforts are required to find a probable solution. In economics there is a

never-ending circle of scarcity of resources and unlimited human wants. The literature review provides for this circle to be understood and ensures that the secondary resources answer the question of what can be done to resolve the research problem at hand.

The literature review also provides for the avoidance of incidental plagiarism. Often researchers put in a lot of effort to write their work but while doing so they might come across a situation wherein they realize someone else is doing on a similar topic and that would negate our efforts if they publish their works first. In case the scholar has conducted a thorough review of the literature they are able to tweak, identify research gaps and answer that particular concern without plagiarizing the data.

INTRODUCTION

This study highlights the key concerns regarding the food insecurity situation in India. We are already aware that food insecurity in India is a growing concern so much so that the policy framework in India tends to have a shortfall on how we are dealing with the problem. With a growing population, it is ideal that there has to be a united front when dealing with this problem in particular. Communities are an ideal platform to take up a united front on these grounds.

Food security is a Fundamental Right under the International Human Rights module. Every country today requires food insurance so as to be in line with the Millennium development goals (Digambar, 2016). The food Security concept is engulfed by 4 common dimensions. Input, process, output, and lastly outcome. All these components have several variables within it and will only provide for a micro understanding of the larger problem (Dev, 2010).

Understanding Food Insecurity: 4-dimensional way

Inputs are the starting point for resolving the issue. It will be concerned with areas such as the production of food grains, import of food grains, and the resulting income from the input process (Dey, 2013). The next dimension is that of the process of consumption which will include the availability of clean drinking water and food distribution programs. The output dimension focuses on variables like food consumption which would include the intake of micro and macro nutrients to provide for a balanced diet and lastly the outcome has to be improved nutritional status (Ecker, 2012). It is ideal to study each of these components individually so as to achieve a holistic scenario of the food security problem (LAL, 2020).

There is a bidirectional relationship between nutritional status and development. Balanced nutrition is critical for both physical and intellectual development which helps people achieve their true potential which in turn can contribute to economic development (Ranjan, 2021). He continues to provide for a more holistic purview regarding the primary concerns of food availability for every individual and it also tends to critically examine what are the hurdles that the food security paradigm may face and potential solutions that can be derived through governmental policies and efforts that the policy framework provides for.

Eckers et al. (2012) have explained the theoretical framework under the aegis of Global Millennium Development Goals which are now popularly termed sustainable development goals. In their assessment, they have mentioned the need for all the nations in a country to focus on bringing the concern for food security under control. They have stated how the nations need to in theory work in that direction so as to be able to achieve the goals of human security and food security.

In a study of the Odisha tribal region the impact of community efforts showcased that some level of food security was ensured through resource mobilization which was particularly targeted toward the vulnerable populations who clearly benefited and were able to overcome some basic economic challenges (Verma, 2022).

The pertinent concern of food security turned to sustainability on a strong note when the current Covid-19 pandemic hit the global scenario. In this case it became evident that the productivity aspect of food security is not the sole concern that all the nations required to get their distribution channels in place for a better tomorrow (Zurayk, 2020). Besides the concern for a medical situation that may escalate food security concerns the case of acquiring food without any discrimination also has been a focus of several studies as well. Mandar (2012) studied regarding the marginalization of women and children in the process of food security in our country. The study provided for a social angle to the food security argument. Social Exclusion also tends to impact the productivity of people especially when they are not included in gaining the basic necessities of life.

The national policy framework after several international commitments has been vast and wide in nature. There are a number of complications regarding who it will benefit, how these policies will benefit and the process of implementation. The method of simplifying the policy framework tends to derail the essence of food security concern that the policy then tries to address. (Dev, 2010)

On conducting a basic state analysis (Dey, 2013) was able to point out that of the four dimensions of food security, it could only provide an extended amount of protection for the production of cereals, especially rice, and wheat. The same study also pointed out to the fact that given the constraints of growth, the tertiary sector post-liberalization took the high flight pushing agriculture to the back burner to a great extent. They also pointed out that India failed to provide security in the field of pulses and oil seed.

The primary concerns regarding food security especially under the aegis of the governmental framework has to be thoroughly studied for effective measures to be applied (Ranjan, 2013). However, besides the framework, there is a need to understand and take into consideration food security measurement methods which are based on situational analysis. Hence devising a method to measure appropriately is going to be a clear concern (Yadav, 2017).

India being country of diverse divisions has been witnessing the problem of food security also in a diversified manner. One such group that has been marginalized has been the tribal areas who too witness the food security concerns but their concerns arise more from the challenges posed by industrialization rather than the issue of accessibility (Rao, 2017).

The Intellectual Property Rights in Framework that has been created under Aegis of WTO has been a major cause for the disaster that the agricultural has seen lately. In reference to this the state of Kerala has been highly educated state which has also seen a shift in the practices of agriculture in this state where the Indian seed market has been highly replaced by the genetically modified seeds and similar practices (Tiji, 2016).

MALNOURISHMENT: A GROWING CONCERN

Another concern associated with food security has been that of malnourishment. India is highly plagued by the concern of child malnourishment that also tends to derail the overall quality of life for all individuals especially in a populace country like India. (Dhamija et al, 2021). In a report by FAO the food insecurity concern across the globe has been provided through a trend analysis which showcases that malnourishment has been a criteria of measuring security concerns have been at a rise (FAO, 2020). Nourishment is a key aspect for every human being. In light of women

reproductive health, the nourishment of body is an essential criterion for both physical and mental health. India cultural system is such that it has been constantly putting the efforts made by women towards enhancement and empowerment on the back burner and that can almost often be a dire situation. In rural India the practice of women consuming left-over food or food at the end after the family has eaten is the most practiced. This results in strategic malnourishment of one category of the population namely women in this scenario (Mastiholi, 2018).

Another High-level Panel of Experts in 2020 focused on shifting the millennium development goals to sustainable goals. Food security became a part of the same stream due to the need for constancy in this particular field. They suggested that it has to be at the grass root level where changes need to be made. Household food insecurity should be targeted (HLPE, 2020). In this regard's food security is like a life improvement vehicle with four gears- availability, approach, allocation and absorption. These four components are constantly missing from the lives of the Indian population in general which is intriguing and at the same time very concerning. With so many policies in place there is an essential wheel of implementation and cooperation which is missing that is unable to cater to the actual needs of the population in an effective manner (Rautela, 2020).

FOOD INSECURITY AND PRODUCTIVITY

On the basis of certain anthropological studies it can be concluded that food is a source of energy which tends to have an impact on the productivity levels of individuals in the society. To begin with when food is not made available adequately to certain populace of the society at specific age groups it leads to a delay in the development in physical and mental faculties (Aurino, 2019).

Hence, productivity is a diverse concept and scientifically it requires people to have better access to food to have a detrimental relationship. However, another study on whether people would like to exchange food for cash was conducted and it was noted that the current ration system merely provides for carbohydrate food base which is easily transferred by people for cash in order to supplement proteins (Shubhashis et.al 2015). It is not merely the economic accessibility that is a concern but the nutritional accessibility is also an important dilemma to be addressed. Concerned with this regard has arisen that food security has been treated from an economic angle with a different perspective while from the social angle, it has been perceived differently (Coates, 2006). One must remember that food cannot be provided for free, it needs to be earned to have its own value in the long run.

FOOD INSECURITY MEASUREMENT AND COMMUNITY KITCHENS

Considering the fact that there are several measures that are constantly used in order to deal with food insecurity; the most evident step that all governments take across the globe is usually to improve the availability of food. These measures are consistently improving however; there are still indices that keep showcasing the severity of concern. In this case the problem could be the correct measurement of food insecurity (Barett, 2010). Urban cities are plagued often with undisguised unemployment in addition to the everlasting concern of food insecurity. It is not merely important to know that food security concerns exist but also important to be able to measure them and devise methods that can help resolve them. The use of the Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFIAS) should be one step that can be taken up while conducting future studies in this regard (Chatterjee, 2006)

Food wastage is a growing concern internationally. Movies like Dive! have provided a glaring reality of how much food is wasted on a regular basis. It is essential to understand the

functioning of campus kitchens and how they can be helpful in disseminating food in such a manner that limited wastage is recorded and more edible food can be provided to those in actual need for it (Himmelheber, 2016). Community kitchens indeed provide for a lot of support to the issue of food insecurity, however, the fact that community kitchens can resolve several social concerns but it cannot help people who are suffering from chronic poverty to come out of the vicious cycle or even improve upon their basic lifestyle needs to be noted (Tarasuk, 1999). It is imperative to note that unless the community kitchens cannot provide means to improve productivity, they will themselves also face the market for lemons in the medium run.

Productivity and economic benefits have to be the key concerns when community kitchens are designed. They need to ensure economic benefits while using the social structure to create a cohesive unit (Farmer, 2018)

One of the practices that has to be emphasized upon is the consumption of food that is local to the vicinity due to the natural abundance of availability which will not only be a wholesome option but also ensure that it is something that is available to all time (Gavararvarapu, 2019). If so done it will ensure that a lot of our food security concerns are well dealt with.

EPILOGUE

Today about one-third Indians are not ensured to get food as required. For ensuring at all times, basic food for all, we have to improve our production, improve our purchasing power and make a sustainable strategy in this direction. The meeting point of these four components might be called an optimum place for food security. Therefore, the need to improve these four components in every place in India is sacrosanct. In addition, food security behaves like a prism, where the convergence of many (about seven points) necessity points, results in an outcome of a better plan to ensure food security. These days, India has a huge buffer stock and we gain surplus production of food grains annually. After the first Green Revolution, famines similar to black terror had been terminated. Even though, malnutrition, unavailability of sufficient food grain is still creating huge barrier for our sustainable development. Without resolving this problem, we cannot think of becoming an economic power in this century. Consequently, a plethora of supporting programmes has been launched by the Government of India for the achievement of desired goals, since 1960. Some schemes were modified into successive schemes and some were demolished. Food accessibility is increased through employment generation and employment can be procreated by the government. The problem of malnutrition is much more critical than food insecurity because it cannot be solved by surplus production or employment generation. They can only be solved, when health status rises and basic health facilities are affordable and reachable to all. As we know, food availability is a necessary condition for food security and India has become well capable in this regard. But due to change in consumption patterns, a need to increase diversification in production and improvement in allied schemes is demanded. Ultimately, India has in its sleeves, many schemes and policies to dissolve food insecurity and malnutrition. Yet these problems are still staring at our faces. Having said that, the Self- help- group approach, the more dedicated and efficient delivery system can play a decisive role in ensuring food security.

RESEARCH GAP

The study is oriented towards understanding the socio-economic impact of community efforts. As mentioned through the different sources of literature that there is a major crisis looming over India with respect to food security issues. A united front is expected to help assist in resolving the problem. However, there is no single solution to the problem. The three models under study use

different orientations and methods to serve certain strata of the society, but it does not extend to everyone and still the marginally poor are left. There is a need to understand these models and their implications and further design a model which can then be tested amongst the marginally poor and see if it can provide a long-term solution to this problem. Another area where research prospects are possible is to see whether there is consistency in the impact that these models have in other cities and draw parallels of similarities and differences. The government can take up a full-scale research analysis to seek out replication of any one model or collaborate and see if a model can be vastly benefiting not merely to deal with right to food concerns but even with respect to providing further opportunities to the people of the country on economic grounds.

CONCLUSION

The literature has shown that there are gaps in research and implementation of practices that could help resolve the issue at hand. The economic issue of unlimited wants and limited resources can never be addressed fully but the basic human needs can be reorganized and planned such that it can reach out to the maximum and bring about economic efficiency of resources by identifying practices at the grassroot level and implementing them to the maximum.

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