

Research on the Role of Education in Poverty Reduction in India

Tiange Wang^{1,a,*}

¹San Diego Jewish Academy, San Diego, California, CA 92130, America

a. swang@kennedycatholic.org

**corresponding author*

Abstract: India has a long history of social and economic problems that combine to produce poverty due to several overlapping variables. Education, an essential tool for countries, has been known for reducing poverty. Poverty is a situation in a country that lacks an economy and critical resources to support a living. When a country cannot meet basic requirements for people, such as food, water, clothing, etc., nobody ought to be impoverished. The purpose of this study report is to determine how education lowers poverty rates and supports Indian families. Education plays a pivotal role in fostering economic growth. For individuals of specific socioeconomic or ethnic groups, access to healthcare, education, and career opportunities is sometimes more challenging than for others. Even while the general level of education has improved, many Indian communities—especially those in rural areas—remain without access to high-quality education. By altering its policies, India can become a better country. This will help the impoverished and lessen social inequality by increasing productivity, raising wages, and creating jobs. This study is significant since it provides an analysis of India's poverty rate. This can aid in people's understanding of what this nation is doing at the moment and what they are doing to better themselves. One of the paper's shortcomings is the dearth of primary sources; instead, the majority of the sources consulted were secondary ones. Surveys and interviews can produce primary sources for upcoming research.

Keywords: Education, Poverty, Economy, Inequality.

1. Introduction

What is the role of education in poverty reduction in India? India has a long history of social and economic problems that combine to produce poverty due to several overlapping variables. Education, an essential tool for countries, has been known for reducing poverty. Poverty is a situation in a country that lacks an economy and critical resources to support a living. When a country cannot reach basic requirements for people like food, water, clothing, etc. Poverty is sustained by inequality in several ways. Physical ability, caste, religion, skin color, and other factors act as institutional barriers that exacerbate the difficulties marginalized people confront, especially those who are already living in extreme poverty [1]. Unstable income in a country is also a reason for poverty. Education is one of the potential ways of reducing poverty. Education is required everywhere. A person can thrive rather than survive with the support of education, which can lead to better jobs, resources, and skills. Even though India is considered one of the developing countries, poverty is still one of its struggles.

According to the BBC, the wealthiest 1% of people in India have amassed 40% of the country's wealth creation between 2012 and 2021 [2]. India ranks 111th place in the Global Hunger Index [3]. Approximately 60% of India's population of nearly 1.3 billion people make less than \$3.10 per day, the World Bank's definition of poverty. Twenty-one percent of the world's population—more than 250 million—live on less than \$2 a day [4]. Fortunately, poverty has decreased in India because of education. With a vast population of people living in poverty, education offers India an alternative way of trying to reach economic and social equality for its people. High-quality education can support children in a safe life and future. According to UNESCO, it is estimated that if every student in low-income countries could read at a basic level, 171 million people would be pulled out of extreme poverty. The poverty rate worldwide could be reduced by nearly half if every adult completes secondary education. Furthermore, compared to their classmates who do not attend school, children who attend school frequently gain information and skills at a greater level. They can then have happier lives and earn more money using these abilities. Education is the best route out of poverty, partly because of its close relationship to economic expansion [1].

Everyone has the right to a comfortable life. No one should be suffering in poverty. This research paper aims to find out how education helps support families in India and how it decreases the poverty rate in India. By using upgraded education, more people will be educated and get high-paying jobs to lift family burdens. Education is very significant because not only does it give people knowledge, but it also helps people with their communication and socializing skills. Even problems like gender equality were supported by education. Education may be valuable for India, where there are considerable gaps based on caste, gender, and geography. It can give underprivileged groups the information and confidence to utilize their rights and exploit their potential. Solving poverty is one of a country's crucial goals when it comes to development. Fully understanding the issue, its foundations, and how it is caused can significantly benefit researchers when finding ways to solve such problems in India. Generally speaking, India needs education to reduce poverty, and countries with lower economies also need education. Education is a very beneficial factor when it comes to supporting a country. This research paper will dig deep into how education reduces poverty in India. This research paper will explore how poverty is connected to the country's economy and how it can increase the economy.

This case explores the connection between poverty and education in India and explains how education can solve poverty. Gaining information, skills, and opportunities through access to high-quality education can empower people and raise their employability, income levels, and general quality of life. It will concentrate on how education affects social empowerment, economic mobility, long-term sustainable development and how education may help reduce poverty in India. Some main factors that caused poverty in India are democratic points of view, the economy, unwell agricultural infrastructure, unequal distribution of money, inflation, education, corruption, etc.(4). The poverty rate in India fell from around 53.86% to 21.23% in 2011. The World Bank is convinced that education is a successful instrument for reducing poverty. Even though India's literacy and education rates are still low worldwide, the SSA has recently gained far more than it did in the past because it was implemented in every region of the country. Nonetheless, more work has to be done. A significant challenge is the need for more instruction in half of India's government educational institutions and a higher student progression rate. Promoting high-quality schools is critical if the country is to end extreme poverty successfully [5].

2. Case Description

2.1. The Connection Between Poverty and Economy

Education plays a pivotal role in fostering economic growth. A study co-published by Stanford University and Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich in 2021 revealed that enhanced proficiency in math and science was responsible for 75% of global GDP growth between 1960 and 2000. Increased employment prospects can significantly boost the economy and help pull families out of poverty. Furthermore, a more educated populace can address substantial financial challenges and strengthen global relationships, inspiring hope and motivation for a brighter future [1].

2.2. Improvements in Society

The Education for All program was established in 1990 during the World Conference. It assured the public that every child, adolescent, and adult could access primary education. India advocates for more excellent global investment in education, which boasts a sizable education system with over 1.4 million schools and 414 million students. India is also held accountable for advancing the cause of educational accessibility. Over 95 lakh instructors, roughly 15 lakh schools, and approximately 26.52 crore students from pre-primary to higher secondary are part of India's educational system, according to the FY22 annual report of the Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+). According to the study, central agencies are working to increase educational quality and accessibility. India owns the third most prominent higher education in the world. The National Education Policy was another policy in 2020; it gave India a fresh new Education system. The top priorities are updating the curriculum, promoting experiential learning, enhancing skill development, aiding teacher preparation, incorporating technology, and supporting research and innovation [6].

2.3. Gender Inequality

Gender inequality has been an issue. Especially in countries like India, women have been treated poorly compared to men. Some people still believed that women should not receive a proper education like men. Gender inequality is another issue that countries have to face. Education gives women and girls the information and abilities to become independent, participate in decision-making, and give back to their communities. There are still obstacles to education for women and girls around the world. Educational possibilities for girls and boys are typically unequal due to these impediments, which cultural, societal, or economic causes might cause. For women, obtaining an education has numerous advantages. By providing knowledge, they offered girls and women the confidence to challenge societal and local assumptions about women. Girls and women will feel like they are independent individuals who will do their share of contributing to the nation. Girls and women will still be fighting injustice and violence against them, but they will also have the education and information necessary to advocate for themselves and make a contribution. With more men and women employed, the economy would begin to grow [7].

3. Problem Analysis

India, a nation renowned for its diversity and home to a substantial population, also harbors a significant portion of the global poverty population. Education, often hailed as a potent tool for poverty reduction, requires a more in-depth exploration of its role in this diverse and populous country.

3.1. MPI of India

India's multidimensional poverty index dropped sharply from 24.85% in 2015–16 to 14.96% in 2019–2021—a 9.89 percentage point drop. Rural areas saw the fastest rate of poverty reduction, going from 32.59% to 19.28% [8]. India, the second-most populated country in the world, has made the most significant progress in reducing poverty, but it still faces challenges. In its poor areas, there needs to be more education access, unemployment, low standards of health care, etc. These factors eventually led to inequality in society, and unequal shares of resources have been colonized for many centuries, which has led to the export of resources and cash. The poorest people in India continue to face financial hardship due to unfair trade, even if this issue has occurred in the past. The poorest states have historically included Bihar and Jharkhand, where a sizable section lacks access to bare essentials.

3.2. Poverty In India

Many reasons cause poverty in India, like low income and low education. All the factors combined shaped poverty in India. The caste system, which breeds inequity among people, is one of India's socioeconomic problems. Access to healthcare, education, and employment prospects is frequently more difficult for members of particular socioeconomic or ethnic groups than for others. Despite improvements in the overall level of education, many Indian communities, particularly those located in rural areas, continue to lack access to quality education. In many regions, uneven economic growth results in fewer job prospects, especially for young people actively seeking employment. Some of the healthcare the country's government provides needs to meet the requirements for acceptable healthcare. Discrimination against genders and social classes still exists in some communities. Some people are treated differently. India does not have an equal rate of wealth and resources. According to the Harvard Business Review, 77% of the country's wealth is held by the wealthiest 10% of people in India. Additionally, the billionaires in India are still growing at unfairly high rates compared to others in India. Better health care is costly in India, so only the wealthy can enjoy that expert care. So, the ranking of social health care in India is considered very low. Many families had to go into debt just for some quality health care, so they had to choose between debt or themselves, causing a high death rate of infants [2].

3.3. Child Labor

Child Labor occurs when a child has to go to work and earn a living to support their family. This labor takes away their freedom and most cherished childhoods. It is also very harmful to their mental and physical health. Education is crucial as children age because it helps them acquire the skills necessary for the modern world. However, kids who are forced into jobs need a quality education. Some kids might not even have an education at all. The household's income might not even support their food, so they need more money to buy food. At a very young age, some kids must be responsible for supporting their families' income. Children will have lifelong traumas from their childhood [9].

Most Indian states with high child labor rates are Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar, and Maharashtra. Uttar Pradesh has the most remarkable rate of child laborers in India, with almost 20% of all child laborers residing in that state alone [10].

Even though India's economy is booming, the nation still has a severe problem with poverty, with over 30% of its people living below the national poverty line. To ease their financial strain and make extra cash, parents sell their children to child traffickers. The leading cause of Child labor is poverty, which is creating a loop. Education is how poverty is slowly reducing in India, but some of the kids are forced to work, and they are deprived of education opportunities. Then, they cannot go to work and have a decent job. Instead, they will still have to work in fields when they grow up, and their kids

might also have to be child laborers. Education will reduce poverty only when it is accessible to the people who need it.

4. Suggestions

4.1. MPI

The MPI of India shows a 9.89 percentage point drop. Although this indicates that India has dramatically reduced poverty, more challenges are presented. There are several ways of reducing poverty: modifying economic growth strategy, improving resources, and improving societal inequality factors. When it comes to the economy, poverty is closely connected with the economy. When the country tries to change its strategies, people in poverty will eventually benefit from economic progress through increased employment possibilities, increased productivity, and higher earnings. This was anticipated to lift the impoverished people over the poverty level. Several models have proposed expanding the pace of capital creation in recent years to boost labor productivity and provide additional job opportunities. Human resource development is another strategy for reducing poverty in addition to economic growth. More funds must be allocated to schools, technical training facilities, and vocational institutions to support people in learning, acquiring new skills, and evolving as workers. The type and quality of education can significantly impact India's poverty situation. In addition, enhancing public funding for pharmacies, hospitals, and Primary Health Centers is essential for strengthening public health and well-being, which is critical for building a robust labor force. [11] People in societies must be on the same level; inequality should not exist. Everyone should have the same access to resources. Governments should take care of their people.

4.2. Reducing Poverty

Low income and low education have been essential issues in India. Some low-income families need help to afford education for their children, so their children will not receive proper education and will not have great opportunities. Schools and nonprofits may team up to support items like textbooks, clothing, and extracurricular activities. Families in need should have an easy way to apply for assistance. Schools should make plans for pupils to receive immunizations, eye exams, and health screenings since good health is also vital for learning, especially for students from low-income households [12]. The caste system in India is creating inequality among people. Straightforward ways are that people can start protesting about anti-discrimination among people. People could also petition the government regarding their problems and seek their attention. Regarding few job opportunities, people should start going out more and exploring the world. Many people in India are trapped under their roofs; they should seek job opportunities. Not all jobs require a high education level. However, promoting education is still one of the most critical factors in reducing poverty. Everything is related to education, and education is related to the economy. When the economy starts to look bright, the country can begin thinking about charity education, where low-income families can send their children to school at a lower price or for free. It is challenging to achieve, but they will be highly successful when India achieves this.

4.3. Child Labor

Child Labor is quite common in India; it is very harmful to the children. It deprives them of their right to have fun and a happy childhood. Many parents do not care much about their children; they only focus on whether their family can be fed. The worst forms of child labor can be eradicated by assisting kids in leaving hazardous situations as soon as possible and putting programs in place for their mental health and reintegration. Strong child protection professionals who can offer parents and kids the

necessary assistance are required. Ensuring everyone has access to early childhood education resources, affordable daycare, and pre-primary education is essential to increasing the possibility that children will enroll, stay in school, and prosper. Fighting poverty, a significant contributor to child labor, requires social protection. Combining financial transfers with programs like child protection and education can be beneficial. Child poverty can be decreased, school attendance can be increased, and access to healthcare can be improved by implementing or increasing child benefits and cash transfers. It's crucial to keep an eye on how these efforts are going. [13]

5. Conclusion

5.1. Key Findings

India, one of the most populated countries, has been suffering economically. Even though data shows that they are doing very well in reducing poverty, they still struggle with factors such as insufficient education, low income, social inequality, and child labor. Although education is frequently praised as a powerful instrument for reducing poverty, its function in this diverse and large nation needs to be thoroughly examined. Uneven economic growth leads to fewer job opportunities in many places, particularly young people actively looking for work. In specific communities, discrimination based on socioeconomic class and gender persists.

India can be improved in many different ways. People living in poverty eventually gain from economic advancement when the nation strives to reform its policies because of more work opportunities, productivity, and earnings when encouraging people to reject the Indian structures that breed inequality in society.

5.2. Research Value of this Research

This research explores the relationship between poverty and education in India. However, it is not limited to just education. It expands on multiple factors. This research is important because it shows how India is doing based on poverty. This can help people understand what this country is doing right now and what they are doing right now to improve themselves. Researchers reading this can learn how India is progressing and what challenges it has to face. This could potentially help some countries avoid mistakes.

5.3. Limitations

There are several limitations in this research paper. There is a lack of primary sources; most of the sources used in this paper are secondary sources. Future studies can be generated by interviews or surveys, which will work better because some of the sources used are not modern enough. Surveys and interviews can also be a way to collect primary data.

References

- [1] Connell, R. (1994). *Poverty and education*. *Harvard educational review*, 64(2), 125-150.
- [2] Joshi, G., & Yenneti, K. (2020). *Community solar energy initiatives in India: A pathway for addressing energy poverty and sustainability?*. *Energy and Buildings*, 210, 109736.
- [3] Index, I. G. H. (2021). *India-Global Hunger Index (GHI)-peer-reviewed annual publication designed to comprehensively measure and track hunger at the global, regional, and country levels*.
- [4] Thorat, A., Vanneman, R., Desai, S., & Dubey, A. (2017). *Escaping and falling into poverty in India today*. *World development*, 93, 413-426.
- [5] Roy, P. (2008). *Effects of Poverty on Education in India*. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. 331-335
- [6] Hota, P., & Sarangi, P. (2019). *Quality revolution of higher education: A study in India*. *Sruti Management Review*, 12(1).

- [7] Singh, K. (2016). *Importance of education in empowerment of women in India*. *Motherhood International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research & Development*, 1(1), 39-48.
- [8] Aayog, N. I. T. I. (2023). *National multidimensional poverty index—a progress review 2023*. New Delhi, 2023-07.
- [9] Bolla, S. (2004). *Child Labor in India*. No. p-2-4.
- [10] Kundu, A. (2024). *Multidimensional Poverty Indices in India: Evolution, Framework and Applicability*. SAMRIDDHI, p. 11.
- [11] ISPP. (2023) *Impact of Education Policy on India's Economic Growth*.
- [12] Reach Well. (n.d.) *10 Back-to-School Tips to Engage Low-income and Migrant Families*.
- [13] Ramachandran, A. (2023, May 14). *Humanium. Child labor in India*.