

MPRA

Munich Personal RePEc Archive

Food Insecurity in India: Natural or Manmade?

Vijay Kumbhar

Abasaheb Marathe College, Rajapur (Maharashtra) India

2010

Online at <https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/23661/>

MPRA Paper No. 23661, posted 10. July 2010 08:41 UTC

Food Insecurity in India: Natural or Manmade?

Prof. Kumbhar Vijay
(M.A. NET, SET, GDC&A, DIT)
Department of Economics,
Abasaheb Marathe College, Rajapur
Dist – Ratnagiri 416 702 (Maharashtra)
Vijay.kumbhar9@gmail.com

Abstract

The issue of food security, especially in a developing nation like India, raises the twin problems of uncertain food production and unequal food distribution. The impact of unequal food distribution can have adverse effects on the rural and urban population living below the poverty line. Food insecurity is not only economic problem but also problem of non-humanity approach in India. There availability of the food grains is enough to satisfy their needs. According to the statistical data published by the 'Food Corporation of India' and the government of India foodgrain availability is 229 million tonnes in 2008-09 which is 230 million tonnes in previous year. While it is happening because, foodgrain traders are doing speculation practice and sealing them in high prices than fair prices. We may say that, Food insecurity is not only natural but also manmade

Introduction

India is second largest country in the world in the manner of population. It is most important considerable plus point of the India, because it involve large human capital. Even we all Indian are thinking that, we will become *super power* in the world. But when we look at the basic problems of the Indian peoples, we know that- the Indian common man is facing lots of problems today. Recently most of Indian peoples are struggling with the bread and butter due to the continuously increasing prices of foodgrain, vegetables, pulses and other cereals.

What Is Expected In Food Security?

Food security happens when all people at all times have access to enough food that should affordable, safe and healthy, culturally acceptable , meets specific dietary needs, obtained in a dignified manner and produced in ways that are environmentally sound. The World Food Summit of 1996 defined food security as existing “when all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life”. Commonly, the concept of

food security is defined as including both physical and economic access to food that meets people's dietary needs as well as their food preferences. But food security is a complex sustainable development issue, linked to health through malnutrition, but also to sustainable economic development, environment, and trade. There is a great deal of debate around food security. If we fail to maintain above there has been food insecurity. Food insecurity exists when all people, at all times, do not have physical and economic access to the sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

Supply Side Analysis of Food Insecurity in India

According to the data published by the government of India and the Food Corporation of India, total production of foodgrain was 230.78 million tonnes in 2007-08 and in recent year it is 229.85 million tonnes. There is just 0.93 million tonnes of foodgrain production decreased than last year. Hence question is that, only 0.93 million tonnes falling production of foodgrain can create such situations of food insecurity in India? When look at the statistics relating to the major foodgrain production. We found that, rice production is increased from 96.69 to 99.37 million tonnes in 2007-08 to 2008-09, wheat production is decreased from 78.57 to 77.63 million tonnes, production of coarse cereals is just decreased from 40.76 to 38.67 million tonnes, cereals production is decreased from 216.02 to 215.67 million tonnes and production of pulses is near about stable it is changed from 14.76 to 14.18 million tonnes in same year.

In the same year population growth is near about hardly 1.10 percent and net growth of population may be 0.50 to 0.75 percent. It is not larger growth which may become burden on food supply in India. Because, in the same period fish production is increased from 6.8 to 7.3 million tonnes, fruit production increased from 59563 thousand tonnes and production of vegetables is increased from 115011 to 125887 thousand million tonnes. Apart from the production of foodgrain and supported foods buffer stock of foodgrain also increase continually since 2007. In year 2006-07 buffer stock of wheat were 54.28 million tonnes and 119.77 million tonnes of rice stock. In year 2007-08 stock of wheat were 77.12 million tonnes and 114.75 million tonnes of rice and in year 2009 stock of wheat is increased to 182.12 million tonnes and stock of rice is increased to 175.76 million tonnes. There has been net growth in the major foodgrain production in India. So we conclude that, it is not economic problem it may be another.....

Trade Practice Analysis of Foodgrain Market

Supply side analysis of the food market shows that, there is not greater change in foodgrain production in India. But recently all Indians are facing a problem of low availability of foodgrain in the market and its higher prices. It is questionable, because generally trend of rising price can be found whether production of particular goods is decreased. But unfortunately production of foodgrain is near about stable while prices are rising rapidly in India. It is happen in the retail market due to the speculative practice of the traders. According to the supply department of the government of Indian and the government of Maharashtra most of traders are kipping illegal stock of foodgrain and pulses. They are doing such for only profit motive and ignore the morality. Hence, we can say that it is not only natural problem but also manmade. In another word we can say that "*Hunger created by nature but supported by traders*".

How Can Tackle It?

It may be possible to make food security in India in good manner. If we doing the proper planning of foodgrain production and fair practices in food market. There is need of strong control over the food market in India. In developing countries like India, the root causes of food insecurity include, poverty, corruption, national policies that do not promote equal access to food for all, environmental degradation, barriers to trade, insufficient agricultural development, population growth, low levels of education, social and gender inequality, poor health status, cultural insensitivity, and natural disasters. If the government concentrate the problem specific it is possible by the existing majors, but there is need of implementation of that in proper manner and accurately. Public distribution system is very good way to overcome the problem of speculation by the private traders.

Another way to food security is increase in fruit, milk and fish production, Fish is not only a vital food it is also a source of livelihood for millions of people around the globe. We can solve that problem by the increase in inland and sea fish production in India. The policy of mitigating nutritional deficiencies and food security by fisheries is a pragmatic move in India, considering the fact that sea has ample scope for continuous supply of protein rich food. We need to exploit the food from sea to counter the menace of malnutrition. India, with its vast coastline and seas can use science and technology to make full use of fisheries in ensuring food security to its vast populace.

The objectives of the Public Distribution System-PDS are good but it was failed to accomplish that objective due to the corruption. PDS is better way to tackle the problem of food

speculation of private traders. If the government will succeed in the motive of PDS the intensity of food insecurity problem will be reduced in future. However, the cruel reality is that despite this huge food production, a huge buffer stock and an extensive network of PDS, millions of people are food insecure and many even die of starvation. Food Insecurity and tragedy hit different parts of the country every year.

The present food crisis is due to lack of proper distribution and the trading system impeding free flow of food. Even increase in agricultural productivity also one of the solution for this problem. This should be based on integrating inputs and outputs-the supply of high yielding varieties of seeds, fertilizers, and irrigation, supported by credit alongside remunerative output prices. A second “green revolution” is essential to stimulate food production in many India. . It is crucial to ensure that farm and trade policies of developed countries do not artificially reduce the prices of their foodgrains. This makes it virtually impossible for farmers from developing countries to compete both in their own domestic markets, due to cheap food imports, and also in the international market.

The problem of food security comes mainly from the slow growth of purchasing power of the people in the rain-fed eco-systems. Efforts must be made to help them by developing drought resistant seeds, cost-effective dry-land farming techniques. A major challenge to food security comes from dietary diversification of the poor. If cereal pricing is left to the market forces, government playing the facilitating role, land will be released from rice and wheat cultivation to meet the growing demand for non-cereal crops such as oilseeds, fruits and vegetables in accordance with diet diversification. At the movement the problem is the problem of distribution of existing comfortable level of supply. However with increasing population combined with low agricultural productivity. Therefore we should do efforts to increase productivity and re-correct the distribution problems.

Conclusion

Although, we can say that food security problem in India is not serious if we success in the proper distribution policy. But problem is that, the government has failed to control and regulate food market in India. This problem becomes serious due to the unfair trade practice by private traders doing in drought situation. The problem of hunger is due to poor economic accessibility. It is result of poor implementation of policy measures.

References:

1. Amitava Mukherjee *Micro-Level Food Insecurity in Contemporary India: Perspectives of the Food Insecure* 2007.
2. Bickel, G., Nord, M., Price, C., Hamilton, W. & Cook, J. 2000. *Guide to measuring food security, revised 2000*. Washington, DC, United States Department of Agriculture.
3. Bhalla, G.S.(1994), “Policies for Food Security in India”, New Delhi.
4. Jonson, Mascarenhas, thatte, Chatterji (2002), *Development Issues of Indian Economy*, Manan, Prakashan, Mumbai.
5. Radhakrishna , R. (1991) , “Food and Nutrition: Challenges for Policy”, *Journal of the Indian Society of Agricultural Statistics*,
6. *Economic Survey of India, 2008-09* (The Government of India)
7. <http://www.who.int/trade/>
8. <http://www.foodsecuritynews.com/>
9. <http://www.sccommissioners.org>
10. <http://www.nceus.gov.in/>