



THE PROBLEM OF MALNUTRITION AND HUNGER IN INDIA

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Abstract:

Food security is considered as a human right. Food insecurity is one of the major problems facing humanity in the world. This issue is widely discussed at the international, national, regional and local levels. Food security is a basic necessity as a human right but today millions of people in the world are suffering from hunger and malnutrition. The main cause of this problem is food insecurity issues. Poverty, unemployment, etc. in the country are causing people to lack purchasing power. Hunger is usually understood to refer to the distress associated with lack of food. Despite progress, the problems of chronic Hunger and Malnutrition persist on a mass scale. India has been somewhat unsuccessful in this regard. Access to food for its people. According to the Global Hunger Index Report-2022, India ranks 107 out of 121 countries. In September 2013 the Indian Government passed the National food security Act 2013 more Popularity know as the Right to food bill. Food security is a bigger issue just providing a basic human need and right. The public distribution system needs to strength.

Introduction:

The problem of food security and nutrition is a major issue under the Indian Food security policy. In addition to population, income and urbanization, grain and demand has also increased and that has changed. Even though grain production has increased fourfold since 1951, a large section of our population still suffers from malnutrition and food insufficiency. Ensuring food security is an important issue for a country like India. One third of the population is estimated to be poor.



DEFINITION OF FOOD SECURITY:

At the world food summit 1974 food security is defined as, “Availability at all times of adequate world food supplies of basic food stuffs to sustain a steady expansion of food consumption and to offset fluctuations in production and prices”.

In 1983 FAO- “ensuring that all people at all time, have both physical and economic access to the basic food that they need”.

An FAO report, August 2008, defines food security in terms of the following four key aspects:

- **Food Availability-** sufficient availability of food with the nation through domestic production, net imports (commercial or food aid) and carry-over of stocks.
- **Food Access** – Individual’s capability to purchase food and to be able to procure food through markets or availability.
- **Food Utilization-** consumption of food by the household in a proper form. It also takes into account food preparation, storage and Utilization, food safety, nutritional safety and dietary balance.
- **Food Vulnerability-** Vulnerability of the population to food insecurity due to physiological, economic, social or political reasons.

Review of Literature:

Sharma Sachin (2016)

A book named ‘The WTO and food security Implication for developing country’ was published in the year 2016 by Sharma Sachin in which detailed information about the effects of food security in developing countries has been provided. Also, in this book food security in developing countries, agriculture agreement, support price, agriculture sector and food security as well as food security policy and food security situation in India are described in this book.



K.C.S. Acharya (1983)

A book called 'Food security system of India' written by K. C. S. Acharya was published in the year 1983. In this book he has presented important information about various administrative policies related to food security of the Government of India. Apart from this, the recommendations of the Ashok Mehta committee appointed in the year 1957 have also been mentioned in the present book. Thus, this book provides special information related to food security in India.

Reddy Siddulinga (2015)

A research paper called 'Food security in India: Challenges and Suggestion for Effectiveness' by Reddy Siddulinga was published in the Indian journal in 2015, according to which millions of people in the world are suffering from hunger and malnutrition. The main cause of this problem is food insecurity. India is the second most populous country in the world. Per capita food consumption in India is declining as financial income is low and commodity prices are high, poor people are deprived of nutritious food. It knows through this research paper.

Methodology:

The present study is based on the secondary data which have been collected from books, journals, articles, internet sources etc.

Objectives of the study:

The present study is based on the following objectives

1. Intended to know India's position in Global Hunger Index.
2. Comparison of neighboring countries with respect to Global Hunger Index aims to get information about the status of India.
3. Objective to know the Nutritional status of Children in India.

Food Security in India:

- Food security concerns can be traced back to the experience of the Bengal Famine in 1943 during British colonial rule, during which about 2 million to 3 million people perished due to starvation.



- Since attaining independence, an initial rush to industrialize while ignoring agriculture, two successive droughts in mid-1960s. and dependence on food aid from the United States exposed India's Vulnerability to several shocks on the food security front.
- The country went through a Green Revolution in the late 1960s and early 1970s, enabling it to overcome productivity stagnation and to significantly improve food grain production.
- The green revolution was followed by the white Revolution, which was initiated by operation flood during the 1970s and 1960s. this national initiative has revolutionized liquid milk production and marketing in India, making it the largest producer of milk.

Concerns about food security in India:-

- Agricultural productivity in India is extremely low.
- According to world Bank figures, cereal yield in India is estimated to be 2.992 Kg Per hectare as against 7.318.4 Kg Per hectare in North America.
- The composition of the food basket is increasingly shifting away from cereals to high-value agricultural commodities like fish, eggs, milk and meat. As incomes continue to rise, this trend will continue and the indirect demand for food feed will grow rapidly in India.
- According to FAO estimated in "The state of food security and Nutrition in the world 2018" report, about 14.8% of the population is undernourished in India.
- Ad per the Global Hunger Index, 2022, India was ranked 107th out of 121 qualifying countries.

Table 1: India's Score and Rank in Global Hunger Index.

YEAR	GHI SCORES	GHI RANK	Number Of Countries
2006	27.5	96	119
2007	25.03	94	118
2008	23.7	66	88



2009	23.9	65	84
2010	24.1	67	84
2011	23.7	67	81
2012	22.9	65	79
2013	21.3	63	78
2014	17.8	55	76
2015	29.0	80	104
2016	28.5	97	118
2017	31.4	100	119
2018	31.1	103	119
2019	30.3	102	117
2020	27.2	94	107
2021	27.5	101	116
2022	29.1	107	121

Source: Global Hunger Index Report 2006 to 2022

Studying the above table reveals that India is among the countries with severe hunger in the year 2006 out of 119 countries in the world with a rank of 96 and a GHI score of 27.5, in the year 2014, India ranked 55 out of 76 countries and with a GHI score of 17.8, India is among the countries with moderate hunger in the world. Studying the above table, it is known that except for the year 2014, India is included among countries with severe hunger in the world.

Table 2: India's Position compared to neighboring countries in terms of Global Hunger Index. (2022)

Countries	GHI SCORES	GHI RANK
Sri Lanka	13.6	64
Nepal	19.1	81
Bangladesh	19.6	84



Pakistan	26.1	99
India	29.1	107

Source : Global Hunger Index Report 2006 to 2022

The above table shows information about the position of India in comparison to neighboring countries in terms of global hunger index. Studying the above table shows that India ranks 107th out of 121 countries and has a GHI score of 29.1 according to the 2022 Global Hunger Index Report. Which shows that India is included in the countries with severe hunger. India's position in terms of GHI score is not good compared to its neighboring countries. India's neighboring countries such as Sri Lanka 13.6, Nepal 19.1, Bangladesh 19.6 and Pakistan fared better than India with GHI score of 26.1. This describes the serious situation of hunger in India.

Table 3 : Trends Nutritional status of Children (percentage of children age 0-59 months)

Nutritional status of Children	NFHA -3	NFHS-4
Stunted (low height-for-age) %	48	38
Wasted (low weight-for-height) %	20	21
underweight (low weight-for age) %	43	36

Source: National Family Health Survey 2005-06 and 2015-16

The above table shows the statistical information about the percentage of Nutritional status among Children (children aged 0-59 months) in India. According to the report of the National Family Health survey of the Government of India, the statistical information about percentage of Malnutrition among children in India is shown in the above table. According to which the percentage of Stunted (low height-for-age) children in India was 48% in 2005 – 06 which has decreased to 38% in 2015-16. Which can be called a good thing. The percentage of Wasted-undernourished (low weight-for-height) children in India was 20 % in 2005-06 while in 2015-16 it was 21 %. Also, the percentage of underweight (low weight-for age) children in India was 43 % in the year 2005-06, which decreased to 36 % in the year 2015-16.



Thus, studying the state of malnutrition among children in India, it is found that the percentage of children whose growth is stunted in India has decreased relatively. While the proportion of malnourished children has increase in the proportion of children with low birth weight. Despite this, malnutrition among children still persists in India. A proper food safety policy should be implemented so that this proportion can be reduced.

Evaluation of study:

The Global Hunger Index is one tool. Which measures and focuses on hunger globally by region and country. The global hunger index is calculated annually and the results are presented annually in a report. The global hunger index, created in 2006, initially included the US. Based 'international food policy research institute' and published by the German based Welthungerhilfe. In 2018 the 'international food policy research institute' became a spin-off project and the global hunger index became a joint project of Welthungerhilfe and concern Worldwide .

The world hunger index is calculated based on 100 basis points. According to which 0 (zero) is considered as the best number. While a score of 100 is considered the most dire. The severity of hunger associated with the Global Hunger Index is as follows.

GHI severity Scale				
≤ 9.9 Low	10.0 - 19.9 Moderate	20.0 - 34.9 Serious	35.0 - 49.9 alarming	$50.0 \leq$ Extremely alarming

Source: Global Hunger Index Report.

The Global Hunger Index is constructed based on four indicators.

- 1) Percentage of undernourished people.
- 2) Proportion of underweight children. (children of 0 to 5 year)
- 3) Child mortality rate. (children of 0 to 5 year)
- 4) Proportion of children. Suffering from malnutrition. (children of 0 to 5 year)

According to the Global Hunger Index, India is included among the countries with severe hunger. According to the Global Hunger Index the countries of our countries cannot be said to be good in relation to neighboring countries. Also According to the above information,



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through the report of the National Family Health survey of the Government of India , it is known that even though we have made good progress in the matter of nutrition among Children in India compared to the previous years, we should still try to implement food security related plans in this direction.

Government of India has implemented schemes, policies and programs like public Distribution System, Annapurna Yojana, mid day meal yojana, integrated child Development yojana, Antyodaya yojana, National Food Security Act etc - 2013 etc. to ensure food security for the entire country. If all these schemes are implemented prooperly, the problem of hunger and Malnutrition in India can be successfully eliminated.

Conclusions:

Cereal production in India increased and the country has become the world's largest Producers of cereals like rice and wheat. However the levels of hunger and Malnutrition remain high. At present, the biggest challenge is not only improving the productivity of Agriculture, but also Making the food grains accessible to the poor and needy.



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