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Calorie Intake and Poverty Levels in Andhra Pradesh with Special Reference to Srikakulam District

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Abstract:

In this paper, an attempt is made to analyze the calorie intake and poverty levels in the study area. The present study is conducted in Srikakulam Dist. in Andhara Pradesh. The study covers two Mandals viz., Polaki and Etcherla Mandals in Srikakulam District for the purpose of calculating calorie intake and Poverty levels. The results of the average per capita calorie intake per day revealed that it is lower (i.e.3599.40) in Etcherla mandal when compared to Polaki mandal (i.e. 3817.56). The results of sub-castes revealed that the average per capita calorie intake per day is lower in STs and SCs when compared to BCs and OCs in both the mandals. From this it may be inferred that the heads of the households should be motivated to change the pattern of allocation of expenditure by shifting the expenditure made on alcoholic consumption to consumption of calorie intake. The analysis of the distribution of households according to Head Count Ratio (HCR) revealed that 30% of the households are lying Below the Poverty Line (BPL) in Etcheral mandal, while it is 27% of households in Polaki mandal. However, the analysis of sub-castes revealed that in both the mandals majority of the people belonging SC and ST groups are lying Below the Poverty Line. From this it may be inferred that through the government has been launching several poverty alleviation programmes, these are not adequate to wipe out poverty in the society. This may be the reason that the Govt. is undertaking special programmes to extend the benefits of fruits of development to the weaker sections in the name of "Inclusive Growth" during the Eleventh five year plan.

Key Words: Rural Poverty, Calorie intake, Poverty levels

Introduction:

Though various state governments have enacted legislation for the introduction of minimum wages, such Legislation is rarely enforced rigorously in a rural society which is dominated by vested interests. The wages that the landless labourers actually receive are generally at the level of bare subsistence. They are perpetually in a state of indebtedness to the rich farmers who also act as money lenders. This is caused basically by eternal poverty but aggravated due to social obligations and expenditure on religious and social ceremonies and rituals. The spread of banking sector to the rural areas in recent decades has not changed their position significantly. A considerable proportion of the landless labourers have been forced by this state of affairs to become bonded labourers. Several state governments are taking steps to eradicate this socio economic evil which are found to be inadequate (Govt. of India, 1983).

Ranger Nurkse (1953) popularized the 'vicious circle of poverty' in early 1950s which had been formulated earlier by Gunnar Myrdal with reference to poverty of the Negroes in U.S.A (GunnarMyrdal, 1944). Nurkse asserts that poverty breeds poverty in a chain of circular causation and formulated as follows: it employs, of course, a circular constellation of forces tending to act and react upon one another in such a way as to keep a poor country in a state of poverty. For example, a poor man may be weak; being physically weak, his working capacity may be low which means his earnings are low, which in turn means that he will not have enough to eat; and so on. A situation of this sort, relating to a country as whole, can be summed up in a trite proposition: 'a country is poor because it is poor'. Gunnar Myrdal has rightly pointed out, if Nurkse's poor man produced less food that would enable him to survive in a state of health necessary for maintaining barely the existing level of production, he would in fact gradually become poorer because he is poor.

Objectives:

1. To estimate the calorie intake in the study area.
2. To estimate the extent of rural poverty in the study area.
3. To suggest appropriate policy initiatives to alleviate poverty.

Area of the Study:

The present study is conducted in Srikakulam District, one of the backward districts in Andhra Pradesh. The study covers two mandals viz., Etcherla and Polaki Mandals in Srikakulam District for the purpose of in-depth analysis on rural poverty during the months of February and March in 2019.

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Methodology:

To measure the poverty levels the quantity of food items have been converted into calories by using the consumption tables of Gopalan, Barbara and Harris. In calculating the per capita figures such as expenditure and calorie intake members of the households are converted into adult units by using the familiar ratios i.e. one female adult is equal to 0.80 and child is equal to 0.60 where as male member is consider as one (1).

In order to have some standardization in measuring the consumption expenditure, the retail prices as reported by the village retail shop keepers, are averaged and used in the valuation of physical quantities consumed. Such standardized prices are also used for estimating the money value of the asset. Statistical tools used for processing the data include simple frequency counts, percentages and averages.

Sample Design:

The field study has been undertaken in two Mandals viz, Etcherla and Polaki in Srikakulam District of Andhra Pradesh. The selection has been made on the basis of different geographical features of the Mandals. The Polaki Mandal is a relatively well irrigated area and the geographical feature of the Etcherla Mandal is neither well irrigated area nor completely dry area. The reason to select this area is its relative backwardness compared to other mandals in Srikakulam District. A modest attempt has been made to study the levels of living of the sample households with focus on calorie intake and income inequalities among Schedule Castes (SCs), Schedule Tribes (STs), Backward Castes (BCs), and Other Castes (OCs). To select the households in the study, we used non random sampling technique. The total sample households are 133 in the study area.

Household Survey:

Most of the studies relating to poverty used household data (Deaton, 1998). As such, household survey has been used to collect data for the present study. The unit of observation is the household itself or the individuals within the household in the household survey. Since a household is usually defined as a group of persons eating and living together, the most common indicators used in practice are based on household consumption expenditure and household income. The most common survey used in poverty analysis is a single cross-section for a nationally representative sample, with the household as the unit of observation, and it includes income data. This form of survey is cheaper per household surveyed than most alternatives, and this allows a larger sample than with longitudinal and or individual based survey. A larger sample of household-level data gives greater accuracy in estimating certain population parameters and poverty analysis.

The household survey is mainly based on a household schedule and largely concerns with qualitative and quantitative economic and empirical analysis. The format of the questionnaire, covering the broad aspects of household's socio-economic, demographic and village specific characteristics, is such that the information could easily be transformed on an individual basis. All the three modes of the household survey data collection are employed in the study. They include: (i) direct questioning of household head and other members; (ii) Extracting data from participant observation; and (iii) Interviewing of selected informants.

Limitations of Household Survey:

Data collected through sample surveys are subject to both sampling and non-sampling errors. A sample, being a part of the population, may not represent the population exactly, even if it is drawn scientifically. There may be a difference between the estimate of static and the actual value of the population parameter that is being estimated. The said difference is called the sampling error. In the context of household survey for the present study, the magnitude of sampling errors is tried to be minimized by taking into account the socio-economic conditions of households, listing of the sample households and choosing an optimum sample size of the study area.

As far as non-sampling errors are concerned, these may occur during the enumeration, editing/coding, data processing and data presentation stage. Normally, non- sampling errors also originate as a consequence of local customs and conditions, which are beyond the control of the researcher. Due to illiteracy, household income and expenditure accounts are not kept by the households in the majority of cases, and incorrect statement of income and expenditures on account of memory bias. However, in the present context, personal assessment and crosschecking from co-residents have been made to elicit information during the household survey. Thus, efforts have been made to minimize the non-sampling errors within the given circumstances.

Review of the Literature:

P. D. Ojha estimated the number of persons below the poverty line on the basis of average calorie intake of 2,250 per capita per day. This entailed monthly per capita consumption expenditure of Rs.15/- to Rs.18/- (1960 – 61 prices) in urban areas and of Rs. 8/-to Rs.11/- in rural areas. On this basis, Ojha estimated that 184 million persons in the rural areas (51.8 percent of total rural population) and 6 million persons in the urban areas (7.6 percent of urban population) lived below the poverty line. For the country as a whole, 190 million persons (44 percent of total population) could be classed as poor in 1960-61. Ojha concluded that 'compared to 1960-61, the nutritional deficiency in rural areas widened

considerably in 1967-68. As a consequence 52 percent of the population in 1967-68 was found to below the poverty level'.

V. M. Dandekar and Mr. Nilkantha Rath estimated the value of the diet with 2,250 calories as the desired minimum level of nutrition. Though the planning commission estimated Rs.20/- per capita per month (or Rs.240/- per annum) as the minimum desirable standard to secure 2,250 calories of food. Dandekar and Rath observed that it may not be fair to use this figure for both the urban and the rural areas. Therefore, they have suggested somewhat lower minimum for rural population, i.e. Rs.180/- per capita per annum and a some what higher minimum Rs.270/- per capita per annum for the urban population at 1960-61 prices. However, at 1968-69 prices, the corresponding figures for the rural and urban population worked out to be Rs.324/- and Rs.486/- per capita per annum respectively. Dandekar and Rath estimated that in 1968-69 about 40 percent of the rural population and a little more than 50 percent of the urban population lived below the poverty line.

B.S.Minhas estimated on the basis of NSS data revealed that if one regards the level of per capita annual consumption expenditure of Rs.240 as the bare minimum, then 50.6 percent of the population lived below the poverty line in 1967-68. During the period 1956-57 and 1967-68, the proportion below the poverty line among the rural poor seems to have fallen in good harvest years but shot up again in bad harvest years. However, there has been a steady decline in the proportion of people below the poverty line, i.e., from 65 percent in 1956-57 to 50.6 percent in 1967-68. In other words, around 210 million poor people were found in rural areas in 1967-68.

P.K.Bardhan questioned the validity of the GNP deflator used by B.S.Minhas in his study. Bardhan suggested the use of agricultural labour price index as a more suitable deflator. His main argument was that the national income deflator covers both the agricultural and manufactured commodities and as such it is very likely to understate the rise in prices paid by the rural poor because the budget of the poor in the rural areas includes a much smaller proportion of the manufactures than the national average. Bardhan considered per capita minimum income of Rs.15 at 1960-61 prices to be the national minimum and it was a conservative approximation to the minimum standard fixed by the planning commissions study. Bardhan's study brought out the conclusion the percentage of rural people below the poverty line as defined above has gone up from 38 percent in 1960-61 to 54 percent in 1968-69.

Measurement of Poverty:

In order to measure poverty, the first requirement is the measuring rod known as poverty line and the second requirement is the method of measurement. Poverty line is the minimum level of income needed by a household for satisfying its minimum requirements. Once poverty is determined, a method has to be evolved to estimate the incidence of poverty.

Determination of Poverty Line:

Two methods are in vogue for determining the poverty line. The first method is to update the earlier poverty line for temporal and regional differences. An Expert group constituted by the government of India in 1962 determined that expenditure of Rs.20/- per capita per month at 1960-61 prices is needed for providing a reasonable standard of living. This norm is adopted in several studies and suitable adjustments are made for price variations.

In the second method, the data on consumption of various foods, non-food items will be considered and quantities of food consumed will be converted into calories. Then a relationship will be established between calorie intake and total income (or expenditure) and from this relationship the expenditure needed to attain the required calories is estimated.

Measures of Poverty:

Several measures of poverty have been evolved on the basis of the main focus on measurement. A measure of poverty is expected to satisfy certain important axioms.

They are:

a) Monotone Axiom
b) Transfer Axiom

(1). Monotone Axiom: It is required that the measure should indicate increase in poverty when the income of any poor person declines, given the income of others. Similarly, the measure should indicate a decline in poverty when the income of any poor increases, given the incomes of allothers. This axiom is known as "Monotone axiom".

(2). Transfer Axiom: If there is a transfer of income from a poor person to relatively better off person, the measure should indicate increase poverty. Similarly, any transfer of income from a moderately poor person to severely poor person must reduce poverty .This axiom is known as transfer axiom. Four measures of poverty viz.

a) Head – Count Ratio (HCR)

b) Poverty Gap (PG)
c) Squared Poverty Gap (SPG)
d) Sen's Poverty Index

are frequently used in the studies of poverty.

For example, the distinctions between these measures can be understood clearly if each measure is applied for the same data set. Assume that there are four households with per capita monthly incomes of Rs .100, 200, 300, 400. For simplicity we assume that poverty line isRs. 300 per capita per month.

(a). Head-Count Ratio (HCR) : Head–Count Ratio is the proportion of households (or) population deriving less than the poverty line income. It is frequently expressed as a percentage of total households.

HCR = (q / n) X 100

Where, q = the no. of persons below the poverty linen = the total population including non-poor

HCR = 2 / 4 X 100 = 50%

For the above example, the Head-Count ratio is shows that the incidence of poverty is 50 percent since two households out of the four are found to be poor. It is very easy to observe that the Head-Count Ratio does not satisfy both monotone and transfer axioms. Suppose the income of the poorest of the four persons falls from Rs.100 to Rs.80 still the Head-Count Ratio will be the same 50 percent. Similarly if the income of the poorest person increases Rs.120, the HCR is again the same "because the improvement is not adequate to lift him above the poverty line". Thus, the Head -Count Measure violates monotone axiom. The HCR does not fulfill the transfer axiom also. Suppose there is a transfer of income of Rs.20 from the poorest person to the next person in the income order. The HCR is the same because both the poor persons continue to be poor even after this transfer. Even a transfer of Rs.20 from the better off person to the poorest will keep the incidence of poverty at the same level.

Thus the HCR violates the transfer axiom of welfare. Sometimes the HCR gives a perverse result with transfer of income. For instance, if the entire income of the poorest person is transferred to the next person in the order, then the incomes of the four persons will be Rs.0, 300, 300, 400. The Head–Count Ratio shows the perverse result of decline in poverty from 50% to 25 percent. The Head- Count measure is popular because of its simplicity. It is easy to calculate and easy to understand. Its data requirement is less stringent.

(b). The poverty Gap(PG):

The poverty gap represents the average distance between the poverty line and the actual income of the poor, using total population in calculating the average and expressing the average as a percentage of the poverty line.

$PG = (1 / n) \sum [(Z – Yt) / Z] \times 100$
Where, PG = the Poverty Gap
Z = the poverty Line
Yt = the income of the poor person
n = the total population including non–poor
For the above example, the estimate of poverty gap comes to 25 %.
$PG = 1 / 4 \sum [((300 - 100) + (300 – 200)) / 300] \times 100$
= 1 /4 x 300/300 x 100 = 25%

The measure satisfied the monotone axiom but violates the transfer axiom.

(c). Squared Poverty Gap (SPG):

A given short fall in income from the poverty line gives grater suffering for a person further away from the poverty line than to a person who is closer to the poverty line. Hence, a rupee short fall of a poorer person should receive a higher weight than that of a better off person. This measure achieves it by squaring the gap of each person's income from the poverty line and averaging these squared gaps.

$SPG = (1/ n) \sum [(Z – Y_t) / Z]^2 \times 100$

Where, SPG = Squared Poverty Gap

Z = the poverty line

Y_t = the income of the poor person

N = the total population including the non–poor

For the above example, squared poverty gap isestimated as follows.

Person	Per Capita Monthly Income	$(Z - Yt)^2$
1	100	40,000
2	200	10,000
3	300	---
4	400	---
	$\sum (Z - Yt)^2$	= 50,000

SPG = 1 / 4 x (50,000/ 80,000) x 100

= 13. 85 = 13 .9 %

SPG satisfies both monotone and transfer axioms.

Comparison of the three measures:

Though the three measures appear to completely different, they are related in the sense that they are based on a common formula.

(1/ n) ∑ [(Z – Yt) / Z] Where the value of differs for three measures.

The values of zero, unity and two forgive Head- Count, poverty gap and squared poverty gap respectively.

The three measures of poverty serve different purposes .The Head-Count measure gives 'the spread', the poverty gap measure gives 'the depth' and the squared poverty gap gives 'the severity' of poverty.

A sample numerical illustration makes the distinction very clear. Suppose we have two localities each with four individuals. Poverty line is Rs.3 and the incomes are 1, 2, 3, 4, in locality 'A' and 2, 2, 2, 4 in locality 'B'.

(Locality) A	(Locality) B
Rs. 1	Rs. 2
Rs. 2	Rs. 2
Rs. 3	Rs. 2
Rs. 4	Rs. 4

(i) The Head-Count ratio comes to 50% for locality'A' and 75% for locality 'B'

(ii) The poverty gap ratio is 25 % for locality 'A' and 25% for locality 'B', but depth of poverty is same in both the localities.

(iii) The squared poverty gap is 14% for locality 'A' and 8% for locality 'B'.

(d). Sen's Poverty Index:

Sen's similar to that of squared poverty gap. Instead of squaring the gaps, Sen Uses rank order weights. We arrange the poor households in the descending order of income multiply each gap with the rank of the household and aggregate the weighted short falls. The formula of Sen's poverty index (P) is as follows. P = [2 / (q + 1) NZ] ∑ (Z –Yi) (q +1 – i) x 100

Where, q = the no. of households below the poverty lineZ = the poverty line

Y_i = the expenditure of the i^{th} households arrangedin descending order of magnitude

N = the total number of households.

Sen's poverty index is computed for the data in theearlier example.

Sl.no.	Yi	Z – Yi	Weights	(Z –Yi) (q +	1 – i)
1	100	200	2		400
2	200	100	1		100
				Total =	500

Sen's poverty index = (2 /3 x 4 x 300) x 500 x 100 =27.8%.

Sen's poverty index satisfies both monotone and transfer axioms.

Data Collection and Analysis - Calorie Intake and Poverty Levels:

Data relating to average per capita calorie intake per day are presented in Table-1. Calorie intake is obtained by multiplying the intake of food with calories present in it. The calorie tables given by Gopalan, Barbara and Harris is used to derive total calorie intake.

It can be seen from Table-1 that the average per capita calorie per day is 3708.48. It varies around 4573.89 calories in OC category and 3019.64 in ST category. The average per capita calorie intake per day in Etcherla mandal is lower (3599.40) than the average per capita calorie intake per day in Polaki mandal (i.e., 3817.56). The average per capita calorie intake per day in Etcherla mandal varies around 4523.12 calories in OC category and 2938.62 in ST category. The average per capita calorie intake per day in Polaki mandal varies around 4624.67 calories in OC category and 3100.65 in ST category like Etcherla mandal.

Table- 1

Average per Capita Calorie intake per day in overall

Caste	Average Per Capita Calorie intake per day		
	Etcherla Mandal	**Polaki Mandal**	**Overall**
SC	3257.36	3654.78	3456.03
ST	2938.62	3100.65	3019.64
BC	3678.53	3890.16	3784.35
OC	4523.12	4624.67	4573.89
Total	3599.40	3817.56	3708.45

The results of the average per capita calorie intake per day revealed that it is lower (i.e.3599.40) in Etcherla mandal when compared to Polaki mandal (i.e. 3817.56). The results of sub-castes revealed that the average per capita calorie intake per day is lower in STs and SCs when compared to BCs and OCs in both the mandals. From this it may be inferred that the heads of the households should be motivated to change the pattern of allocation of expenditure by shifting the expenditure made on alcoholic consumption to consumption of calorie intake.

Distribution of households according to poverty levels and caste category:

Data relating to distribution of households according to poverty levels and caste category for the total sample households are presented in Table -2. 2400 calories as a considered is norm to classify households as poor in rural area. This implies that the per capita per day calorie intake of a household to be classified as above poverty line has to consume more than 2400 calories.

Table-2

Distribution of Households by caste category and percapita calorie intake per day - Overall

Caste	No .of BPL Households (< 2400 Calories)	Total Sample Households	% of Below Poverty Line		
			H C R	PovertyGap	Squared Poverty Gap
SC	08 (38.09)	21 (100)	38.09	7.38	1.96
ST	06 (42.85)	14 (100)	42.85	8.26	1.79
BC	27 (31.39)	86 (100)	31.39	6.32	1.34
OC	03 (25.00)	12 (100)	25.00	5.73	0.96
Total	44	133	33.8	5.97	1.42

Note: Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage to the totals

It can be seen from Table-2 that 33.08% of the households are in below poverty line group. It varies around 25.00% among OC households and 42.85% among ST households. 38.09% of the SC households and 31.39% of the BC households are found to be in below poverty line. The measure of Head Count Ratio (HCR) shows the spread of poverty. Poverty Gap varies around 5.73% among OC category and 7.38% among SC category. It shows the depth of poverty. The Squared Poverty Gap varies around 0.96% among OC category and 1.96% of SC category. It shows severity of poverty. Thus though the degree of poverty does not differ significantly among BCs (31.39%), SCs (38.09%) and STs (42.85%). Depth of poverty is found to be more among STs (8.26%) than BCs (6.32%). There is no significant difference in severity of poverty among SCs, STs, and BCs.

Data relating to distribution of households according to poverty levels and caste category in Etcherla mandal are presented in Table-3.

Table-3

Distribution of Households by caste category and percapita calorie intake per day in Etcherla Mandal

Caste	No. of BPL Households (< 2400 Calories)	Total Sample Households	% of Below Poverty Line		
			H C R	Poverty Gap	Squared Poverty Gap
SC	05 (35.71)	14 (100)	35.71	7.85	1.73
ST	-	04 (100)	-	-	-
BC	17 (32.69)	52 (100)	32.69	6.32	1.83
OC	01 (14.28)	07 (100)	14.28	6.13	1.12

Total	23	77	29.87	6.32	1.27

Note: Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage to the totals

It can be seen from Table-3 that 29.87% of the households are in below poverty line group in Etcherla mandal. 14.28% of the OC households, 32.67% of BC households and 35.71% of the SC households are found to be in below poverty line.

Poverty Gap varies around 6.13% among OC category and 7.85% among SC category. It shows the depth of poverty. The Squared Poverty Gap varies around 1.12% among OC households and 1.83% among BC households.

It shows severity of poverty. There is no significant difference in severity of poverty among OCs, BCs and SCs in Etcherla mandal.

Data relating to distribution of households according to poverty levels and caste category in Polaki mandal are presented in Table-4

Table-4

Distribution of Households by caste category and percapita calorie intake per day in Polaki Mandal

Caste	**No. of BPL Households (< 2400 Calories)**	**Total Sample Households**	**% of Below Poverty Line**		
			H C R	**Poverty Gap**	**Squared Poverty Gap**
SC	02 (28.57)	07 (100)	28.57	6.72	1.23
ST	03 (30.00)	10 (100)	30.00	7.86	1.98
BC	09 (26.47)	34 (100)	26.47	5.32	1.30
OC	01 (20.00)	05 (100)	20.00	3.81	0.37
Total	15	56	26.78	6.34	1.21

Note: Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage to the totals

It can be seen from Table-4 that 26.78% of the households are in below poverty line group in Polaki mandal. 20.00% of the OC households, 26.47% of BC households, 28.57% of the SC household's and 30.00% of the ST households are found to be in below poverty line. Poverty Gap varies between 3.81% among OC category and 7.86% among ST category. It shows the depth of poverty. The Squared Poverty Gap varies around 0.37% among OC households and 1.98% among ST households. It shows severity of poverty. There is a significant difference in severity of poverty between OC households. The severity of poverty and depth of poverty in ST households are more than all other categories.

The analysis of the distribution of households according to Head Count Ratio (HCR) revealed that 30% of the households are lying Below the Poverty Line (BPL) in Etcherla mandal, while it is 27% of households in Polaki mandal. However, the analysis of sub-castes revealed that in both the mandals majority of the people belonging SC and ST groups are lying Below the Poverty Line. From this it may be inferred that through the government has been launching several poverty alleviation programmes, these are not adequate to wipe out poverty in the society. This may be the reason that the Govt. is undertaking special programmes to extend the benefits of fruits of development to the weaker sections in the name of "Inclusive Growth" inthe Eleventh five year plan.

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Suggestions:

1. Poverty elimination is impossible unless the economy generates opportunities for investment, entrepreneurship, job creation and sustainable livelihoods. Hence, there is a need to develop and promote micro and small-scale enterprises relating to agriculture and livestock sectors in the study area. But it is impossible to build enterprises without access to credit. So the efforts also should be made to provide credit to households at a nominal rate of interest. Micro-finance activities should go hand in hand with entrepreneurship, and job creation for sustainable development. It enables the poorer households to buildup income generating assets.
2. As unemployment and poverty are inter-related with each other, efforts are to be made to promote rural industrialization in order to generate employment and incomes to the rural poor in Srikakulam district.
3. Appropriate extension programmes are also to be planned by the Government from time to time to motivate the weaker sections of the society to becomeaware of the facilities provided by the Government fortheir upliftment.
4. Alcoholism is found to be prevalent in all the households. Hence, there is also need to undertake special programmes by the Government and Non- Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to motivate these alcoholic addicts to give up such habits. If it is controlled, majority of the households can be lifted frombelow poverty line (BPL).

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