

# Globalisation and Poverty: Human Insecurity of Schedule Caste in India

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## Abstract

*Human Security is dominating discourse in present scenario. It is emerges as product of UNDP 1994 Report, produced by Mahbub-ul- haq. How it could be apply in developing country like India where poverty and underdevelopment of a large segment of population called Scheduled Caste. In this paper I am trying to investigate three basic questions- can human security be applicable for India, interface of globalisation and poverty, and finally the case of schedule caste and their insecurity.*

**Key words:** Globalisation, Poverty, Schedule Caste, Human Security.

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Human Security: Concept and Application

The concept of human security involves a fundamental departure from an orthodox, international relations security analysis that has the state as the exclusive primary referent object. Instead, human beings and their complex social and economic relations are given primacy with or over states. Human security is about ‘the ability to protect people as well as to safeguard states’.

The earliest enunciation of the concept is traced to the Canadian psychologist W. E. Blatz’s theory of “individual security” that defines security as all inclusive and all pervasive Compensating for vulnerabilities or insecurities.

Internationally, the concept of Human Security emerged from the 1994 United Nations Human Development Report (UNDP) that stated that the concept of security was focused too narrowly on the nation-state while security concerns of ordinary people in their daily lives seemed forgotten. The UN pointed out that basic material needs should be met in addition with a reasonable expectation of protection, so that survival is not threatened (“*freedom from want*”). Moreover, a condition of human dignity with freedom of violence (“*freedom from fear*”) represents the second key element of Human Security. Since its introduction, many academic disciplines have contributed useful definitions of Human Security. Without discussing these definitions in detail, many of them incorporate aspects of both *want* and *fear*.

One of the foremost thinkers in the area of human security was the eminent economist Mahbub-ul-haq, who attention to this concept in UNDP's Human Development Report(1994) and formulated 7 categories of threats as follows:(1) Economic security,(2) Food security, (3) Health security, (4) Environmental security, (5) Personal security, (6) Community security and (7) Political security. The 2003 report of the Commission on Human Security, *Human Security Now*, equates human security with the protection of "[...] the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfilment" (Commission on Human Security 2003, p 4). The Commission further argues that:

*[h]uman security means protecting fundamental freedoms – freedoms that are the essence of life. It means protecting people from critical (severe) and pervasive (widespread) threats and situations. It means using processes that build on people's strengths and aspirations. It means creating political, social, environmental, economic, military, and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood, and dignity. (ibid., p 4)*

As the Commission further elaborates, "[w]hat people consider to be 'vital' – what they consider to be 'of the essence of life' and 'crucially important' – varies across individuals and societies" (ibid., p.4). As stated in paragraph 143 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome (A/RES/60/1), entitled 'Human Security', the Heads of State and Government stressed "the right of all people to live in freedom and dignity, free from poverty and despair", and recognized that "all individuals, in particular vulnerable people, are entitled to freedom from fear and freedom from want, with an equal opportunity to enjoy all their rights and fully develop their human potential".

However, broadly speaking two conceptual schools of thoughts arise that group most definitions in the 'narrow' or 'broad' conception of Human Security. The narrow conception of Human Security seeks to prioritize insecurities related to military and physical threats that endanger survival. The broader understanding of Human Security (that encompasses most definitions on Human Security) aims to include a far wider range of threats that also affect non-physical aspects like social, psychological, political and economic aspects of vulnerability.

## **2. Methodology and Source**

This work is based on secondary data on poverty and human development. There are two dominating work are taken, first, Tendulkar Committee report and human development report2011. In this study historical and analytical method has been used to analyse the situation of insecurity faced by Scheduled caste in India.

## **3. Human Security: Indian Experiences**

Indian society is a hierarchical society based on caste system. This leads to create inequality on the ground of caste line. Caste based inequality is converting individuals into exclusion. There are two dominating hierarchies in our society: 1) economic hierarchy and 2) status hierarchy.

Schedule Caste is bottom in both the hierarchies. Their existence in bottom of those hierarchies pushes them vulnerable and excludes from societal participation as a member of respective community. The economic reforms initiated in the year 1991 continue even now without any break with the change of government. The midterm appraisal of Tenth five year plan has identified the disturbing gaps between groups, regions and sectors particularly in the area of social justice and empowerment of excluded sections. The victim of the new economic policy impacted on agriculture and obviously Schedule Caste as agricultural labour due to demographic centralisation in rural India. The pace of economic growth and development in India vary state to state and region to region. This variation further fuelled by structure of society and performance of governance. In the present scenario it is well stated that market as an institution supposed to be caste-neutral and universal. But post reform era deepening the inequality among the groups and exclude vulnerable groups particularly Schedule caste. Population below poverty line is mostly concentrated in eastern states of India. They are centralised in rural area of the state. These states are less urbanised and low ranking of human development index. Poverty leads insecurity and exclusion. Schedule Castes are major segment of poor population.

Human security is strategy against the vulnerability of individual and community. In Indian society it is well establish fact that individuals belongs to Schedule castes are most vulnerable in multidimensional aspects. The prominent threats/insecurity of SC's populations in India is lack of democracy, poor governance, human right violation and social exclusion. SC community is suffering from past injustice and at perpetual denial of justice.

Though there are constitutional safeguard as affirmative action or reservation policy exist for protecting their life, they still remain in the periphery of developmental distribution. Denial from development has created constitutive effect of insecurity. Post reform era is continuation of poor performance of both the states in poverty and poor human development. Market has failed to serve as an instrument of inclusion in these states and excluded population.

Human security describes a condition of existence in which basic material needs are met, and in which human dignity, including meaningful participation in the life of the community can be realised. Such human security is indivisible; it cannot be pursued by or for one group at the expense of another. In Indian scenario we find that the some groups are enjoying all the fruits of society while some are excluded from.

Therefore, while material sufficiency lies at the core of human security, in addition the concept encompasses non-material dimensions to form a qualitative whole. In other words, material sufficiency is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition of human security which entails more than physical survival. In terms of a quantitative/ qualitative distinction, this broadly refers to income poverty and human poverty. Schedule Caste, Schedule Tribes, Peasants, Labours, Female are such

categories who are facing both poverty. The human poverty is the result of structural inequality based on caste discrimination. Seen in his *Capability approach* also focus some idea about Social exclusion and poverty issue and its constitutive relation between them.

The quantitative aspect refers to material sufficiency. In this context, Axworthy remarks that ‘At the minimum, human security requires that basic needs are met...’ Therefore the pursuit of human security must have at its core the satisfaction of basic material needs of all humankind. At the most basic level, food, shelter, education and health care are essential for the survival of human beings. This approach is closer to safety needs and basic needs mechanism. But it is not covering the issue of dignity and participation in social life that is the most important for Social inclusion and Human security.

The qualitative aspect of human security is about the achievement of *human dignity* which incorporates personal autonomy, control over one’s life and unhindered participation in the life of the community. Emancipation from oppressive power structures is necessary for human security. Human security is oriented towards an active and substantive notion of democracy, one that ensures the opportunity of all for participation in the decisions that affect their lives. This is closer to the goal of inclusion and Human security. But it is difficult for operationalisation. The actors responsible for such operationalisation are part of the existing socio-economic-political structures.

In recent times ‘human security’ has gained much attention in research and policy-making for exploring its links with poverty and development. It has been stated that there can be ‘no security without development and no development without security’ and there is no doubt that poverty causes multiple insecurities. Poverty may have their origins in human insecurity: insecurity is linked to exclusion and lack of access to resources and power. It has also been stated that “democracy matters for human security because well-designed and inclusive political institutions and the processes are the key for promoting inclusion and participatory governance to actualise human development objectives. Hence, keeping track of human security becomes an important pre-requisite for sustainability of any development activities. Country like India where Pre-requisite is not available for positive input, then how developmental measure would be apply. While as we know development is the process of enhancing the people’s choices for their own life.

Human security is about the absence of insecurities. It is based on three basic freedoms: freedom from fear, freedom from want/needs and freedom to live in dignity. These three freedoms are goal of human security. Human security aims at ensuring the survival, livelihood and dignity of people in response to current and emerging threats – threats that are widespread and cross cutting. Such threats are not limited to those living in absolute poverty or conflict. Today, people throughout the world, in developing and developed countries alike, live under varied conditions of insecurity. These threats seriously challenge both Governments and people. In India as the secondary

data sources claim that the majority of lower caste population are under the absolute poverty line (For Example Tendulkar Committee report) and centralised in rural area.

Human security approach is constituted 3ps namely protection, prevention and promotion. That means individuals who facing insecurities first protected from the insecurity, then prevent them from insecurities and finally promote their life to out from the existing insecurities. In our constitution there are various mechanisms to protect Schedule Caste and Schedule Tribes, like Reservation and educational grants. But still the condition of enabling them in respective society is not achieved.

The whole idea of human security is based upon two pillars - Protection and empowerment. The application of human security derives much of its strength from a dual policy framework based on the mutually reinforcing pillars of protection and empowerment. Application of this framework offers a comprehensive approach that combines top down norms, processes and institutions with a bottom up focus in which participatory processes support the important role of people as actors in defining and implementing their essential freedoms. Protection is top- down approach and empowerment is bottom-up approach. India needs to both mechanism for combating various insecurities. Accordingly, human security underscores the universality and interdependence of a set of freedoms that are fundamental to human life: freedom from fear, freedom from want and freedom to live in dignity. As a result, human security acknowledges the inter linkages between security, development and human rights and considers these to be the building blocks of human and, therefore, national security.

Furthermore, since the causes and manifestations of human insecurity vary considerably across countries and communities, human security strengthens the development of solutions that are embedded in local realities and are based on national ownership. As such, human security enhances the capacities of Governments and people to develop their potential and to live in dignity, free from poverty and despair. Human security is a dynamic and practical policy framework for addressing widespread and crosscutting threats facing Governments and people. Recognising that threats to human security vary considerably across and within countries, and at different points in time, the application of human security calls for an assessment of human insecurities that is people centred, comprehensive, context specific and preventive. Such an approach helps focus attention on current and emerging threats to the security and wellbeing of individuals and communities.

Furthermore, by identifying the concrete needs of populations under stress, human security directly and positively affects the daily lives of people threatened in their survival, livelihood and dignity. As a result, the advancement of human security gives rise to more immediate and tangible results that comprehensively address the root causes behind the threats; Identifies priorities based on the actual needs, vulnerabilities and capacities of Governments and people and reveals

possible mismatches between domestic, regional and international policies and responses. The combination of these elements helps to strengthen actions taken by Governments and other actors in support of human security.

#### 4. Conclusion

Human security has the western emergence but it will be applicable to all over the world, particularly developing world. India is a country where development and deprivation go together. Some groups take all the fruit of globalisation while majority are disadvantaged. Government initiated schemes of empowering deprived section must be evaluate with the lens of Human Security that really those schemes empower or not? How to provide security measure for protecting and empowering the vulnerable groups of India?

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