

POVERTY, VULNERABILITY AND SOCIAL ASPECTS OF SRI LANKA: A CASE STUDY ON VAVUNIYA DISTRICT

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Introduction

The understanding the concepts of poverty, vulnerability, social and their linkage is important in the efforts of standard of living in a country. While vulnerability has often been closely associated with poverty, it has also been seen as being distinct. Historically vulnerability has been seen as a dynamic concept which recognizes and captures change; poverty has been as being static (Moser, 1998). However, the increasing realization the poverty it self is dynamic, "that some of the poor are not poor all of the time" (Yaqub, 2000) means that historical harmony has been establish between poverty and vulnerability.

Poverty is mainly viewed as an indicator of lack of access to resource and income opportunities, but it has other aspects of social positioning such as geographical location, age, gender, class, ethnicity, community structure, community decision making process and political issues that determine peoples' vulnerability (Yodmani, 2001). Poor households often identify vulnerability as a condition that takes into account both exposures to serious risks and defenselessness against deprivation.

Srilankan latest calculation of poverty indices shows that poverty level of the country has further declined from 15.2% reported in 2006/07 to 8.9% in 2009/10,(department of censuses and statistics 2011). It shows that 41% reduction within three years time. The poverty level is measured by Head Count Ratio (HCR) which presents the total number of persons live under the poverty line as a percentage of the total population. The value of the Official poverty line (OPL) of Sri Lanka was Rs. 3,028 real total expenditure per person per month for the 2009/10 survey period and the current monthly values of the OPL are obtained by inflating the base value of the OPL, Rs. 1,423 established in its base year 2002,(department of censuses and statistics 2011).

According to department of censuses and statistic –Sri Lanka, poverty head count ratio at district level, Vavuniya district shows very low comparing with other district. But this indicator reflects the only one indicator of the poverty. The concept of poverty now emphasizes multi-dimensional poverty.

Vavuniya district is located in Northern Province, includes four divisional secretariat including 102 GN division. The total population is 182,957. consist 45558 families. About 79% of the total population living in rural area and mostly employed in agriculture. About 11,446 families are coming under Samurdhi food stamp scheme, which consider only the poor people.

The vulnerability and poverty are comprised of economic, social, cultural, political and environmental factors. Hence it is an urgent need to to analyze these variables to the future post war development context.

The general objective of the proposed study is to analyze the poverty, vulnerability and social aspects in vavuniya district. The specific objectives are as follows:

1. To analyze the poverty aspects in vavuniya district
2. To analyze vulnerability aspects in vavuniya district
3. To analyze the social aspects in vavuniya district

Methodology

In this study, the data were collected as primary as well as secondary. the primary data were collected from 100 samplehousehold surveys using structured questionnaires and interviews .The sample includes the households who are coming underSamurdhi Food Stamp Scheme,.The secondary data were collected by literature surveys such as district statistical report, Annual reports of D.S divisions and NGO records of Vavuniya.

The sample were analyzed by univariate and bivariate analysis consist of mean, standard deviation, p-value, correlation and co-efficient. The result gathered through the SPSS have presented in the charts and tables. Likert scale rating (from 1-5) were used to measure the variable through relevant statement by descriptive analysis.

Discussion and Conclusions

According to the sample of 100 families 1% of families working in private sector.14% of families are doing agriculture, 75% of families' main job is labour and 10% of families are doing other type of job such as masonry. Here the high percentage of families are working as labourers. This is one of the reason why they are still living under poverty,89% of the families' monthly earning is less than Rs 15000 and only 11% of families' earning is between Rs20000 to Rs25000.It reflects income poverty.

The overall housing and environment has the mean value 3.32 with 0.36 standard deviation.This shows that the overall housing and environment condition is moderate level. Regarding the percentage 60 % of households denoted that they are moderate satisfaction level and other 40% are in dissatisfactory level.Only the infrastructure represent dissatisfaction level.The overall health condition represents the mean value 3.00 denote the moderate satisfaction with 0.056 standard deviation .According to the percentage , that the 95% of the households represent the moderate satisfaction level ,3% of them dissatisfaction and 2% of families represent the satisfactory level.Correlation between food and overall health represents63% (0.63) indicates there is strong relationship among these variable and correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

According to the percentage 100% of sample satisfied in their nursery education and 100% of the households moderately satisfied in their primary and secondary education. When considering the higher and informal education 94% of them express dissatisfaction and remaining 6% of sample express higher dissatisfaction.Regarding the self-education and school leavers education 96% of the families pointed out dissatisfaction and 4% of them are highly dissatisfied. And stationary availability and parents awareness in education 100% moderately satisfied.Refering the overall education ,the mean value is 3.40 denotes the moderate satisfaction with 0.102 standard deviation. The overall education 92% of the total sample pointed the moderate satisfaction and the 8% of the sample pointed dissatisfactory level.Overall vulnerabilrty has the mean value 3.62 denotes the dissatisfaction with 0.12 standard deviation. The about 97% of the total households selected dissatisfaction and 3% of them refer to the moderate satisfaction. This shows that they are facing different difficulties.Correlation between verall vulnerability and women headed familyrepresents

86%(0.859) indicate the strong relationship among these variable and correlation is significant at 0.01 level.

According to the social situation , the statements regarding culture,security,social relationship and cooperation of the village people, the mean values are same,that is 3.0 denote moderate satisfaction with 0.0 standard deviation. This shows that moderately the people are socially satisfied in their life.Overall social condition also the mean value is 3.0 with 0.0 standard deviation.And 100% of the sample are in moderate satisfaction level.And 100% of the sample represents moderte satisfaction regarding the overall social relation

The poverty and vulnerability are complex and multifaceted concepts. They are interlinked in such a way that each causes the other. That is to say, while poverty makes people vulnerable to various shocks; their vulnerability to such shocks exacerbates their poverty and hence their vulnerability to future shocks. The results implies, that the people who are living under poverty, mostly affected by vulnerability, economically, educationally and health services.

The all efforts of poverty alleviation should take into account the factors which exacerbate the vulnerability of the poor. The complexity of poverty and vulnerability means that no solution can be valid in all situation and location. Thus it is important to have a clear knowledge of the location in the process of poverty and vulnerability alleviation programs. It means that any successful program must use a multidisciplinary solution designing approach to tackle these multifaceted problems.

The programs should address problems of health and literacy which have been found to be among the major causes of perpetuated poverty and vulnerability. Since income poverty is one of the most notable aspects of poverty, there should be efforts of improve infrastructure and other production support services in order to increase income of the poor. Good governance and rule of law are important in alleviating non-income forms of poverty. To reduce the vulnerability of poorest populations, policy measures should be adapted to local conditions and address several environmental problems at the same time.

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