

# Understanding Poverty

---

## Improve your learning

**Q. 1. Which of the following statement/ statements in the context of poverty as chronic hunger is true:**

- a. having food only once a day
- b. having food below the required calorie
- c. person driving the harvester and person ploughing the field require same calorie of food
- d. person ploughing the field requires more calorie than shop owner
- e. hunger also affects the persons immune system

**Answer :** Options B and E are true.

Option B. This is true because people suffering from chronic hunger takes food below the required calories which leads to undernourishment.

Option E is also true because constant hunger weakens the immune system of the person and makes the person susceptible to diseases.

Option A is false because taking healthy food even if it is once a day does not lead to undernourishment.

Option C is false because requiring same calorie of food does not mean that the person is suffering from chronic hunger.

Option D is false because comparison between the calories of food required by two different workers does not relate to chronic hunger.

**Q. 2. Identify the major reasons for poverty described in the chapter.**

**Answer :** Poverty can be described as a state which deprives people to have access to the basic needs of food, clothing and shelter.

The major reasons for poverty are:

1. Lack of employment

This is the root cause of poverty. Employment paves the way for regular income to fulfil one's needs. Without proper employment, it is difficult to earn for even bread and butter.

2. Inadequate access to food/Hunger:

People living under poverty do not have enough money to buy food grains which results in under nourishment which sometimes turns fatal also.

### 3. Lack of purchasing power:

People who do not have income often do not have the power to purchase things they require.

Livelihood depends mainly on income which enables a person to lead a better and healthy life.

### **Q. 3. What have been the major features in programmes like MNREGA and PDS? Which aspects of poverty do they try to address. Why are ration shops necessary?**

**Answer :** MNREGA and PDS are the welfare schemes implemented by the Government of India. These schemes enable the upliftment of the poor and downtrodden.

#### **MNREGA:**

MNREGA stands for Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act. This Act was passed in the year 2005.

MNREGA guarantees jobs for the unskilled sector. According to the Act, any adult who is looking out for unskilled manual work should be provided work by the Government. This Act provides hundred days of waged employment in a financial year. This improves the standard of living of people in rural areas.

#### **PDS:**

PDS stands for Public Distribution System. This system enables the access for food at a cheaper price. The food grains and other essential items are sold through a chain of fair price shops set up by the Government. Such system is known as the Public Distribution System. This benefits the accessibility of food grains to the people living below the poverty line.

Three types of ration cards are distributed. The poorest of the poor people are given Antyodaya cards. People whose income level is better but can be considered only poor are issued Below Poverty Line (BPL) cards. The third category of people who do not fall in the above two categories and have good income are given the Above Poverty Line (APL) cards. The quantity and price of the grains available in the ration shops depends on the category of the cards the citizens hold.

The MNREGA and PDS addresses the aspects of right to work and right to food.

Ration shops are necessary to ensure the supply of food grains and other essentials to the much needy at an affordable price so that the problem of hunger will be eradicated in the country.

**Q. 4. Why are people without employment also often without assets, such as land, cattle, shops etc.?**

**Answer :** Lack of employment opportunities is a major reason for poverty in India.

Employment is the main source of livelihood for most of the people in our country.

1. Basic necessities of a man are food, clothing and shelter.
2. Income needed to fulfil the day to day essentials is generated only through employment.
3. People also move from one place to another in search of employment.
4. Clothing and shelter can be made available only through employment.
5. If unemployment persists for a long term, people are forced to sell their assets to satisfy their hunger.

Hence people without employment are also without assets like land, cattle, shops etc.,

**Q. 5. Read the paragraph under the heading 'Why Poverty? How can it be eliminated?' and answer the following: What are the other reasons for poverty?**

**Answer :** Poverty is the result of unemployment.

1. People need money to satisfy their basic needs.
2. Employment creates the power to buy the essentials for the day to day living.
3. Other reasons for the causes of poverty in rural areas can be said as the development of technology which has suppressed the job opportunities of people in unskilled sector.
4. The implementation of modern machineries in the agricultural sector has reduced manual labour.
5. The other non-agricultural occupations which rely on agriculture such as potters, weavers etc are also affected because of the input of modern techniques.

Thus, the advancement of technology and other modern methods, even though is a boon, is also a bane for the unskilled sector.