



A STUDY ON THE SOCIAL PROGRAMS OF UTTAR PRADESH GOVERNMENT WITH A REFERENCE TO MEERUT

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ABSTRACT

The majority of the study consists of quantitative analysis. The research uncovered five significant discoveries in all. To begin, a significant number of the social safety net initiatives that have been put into place in Uttar Pradesh have extremely low coverage rates, which in turn suggests that exclusion mistakes are of a very big scale. Second, inclusion mistakes are a concern since the programme is helping people from homes of varying socioeconomic statuses, even though a disproportionate number of the program's beneficiaries come from low-income families. Third, when caste is taken into account, the number of programme beneficiaries who come from SC/ST families outnumbers those who come from other caste groups. Fourth, there is a significant amount of regional variance in the programme coverage, which suggests that the efficiency of service delivery varies from location to location. Fifth, even for low-income families, many of the programmes have a negligible effect on the well-being of the household as a whole.

Keywords: *Poverty in India, Uttar Pradesh, Anti-poverty programs, safety net programs.*

INTRODUCTION

In this study, we evaluate how successful the fundamental social protection programmes in Uttar Pradesh have been (UP). In order to do this, we concentrate on the following criteria: i.) coverage; ii.) targeting efficiency; and iii.) adequacy and possible impact on household welfare; and iv.) coverage and potential impact on household welfare. The research is primarily a quantitative analysis, with the 55th Round of the National Sample Survey (NSS) (which was finished between 1999 and 2000) and the 58th and 59th Rounds 1 of the state-sample NSS (which was finished between 2002 and 2003) serving as the primary sources of data. The research was carried out between 1999 and 2003. 2 In each of the polls, there were more than 14,000 houses and 83,000 individuals that participated. Both polls are representative not just at the state level but also independently for urban and rural regions. In addition to the household surveys, we make use of data from administrative sources held by the government, in addition to a wide variety of secondary sources.

The study provides two major contributions to the current body of research on social safety net initiatives in India. These are the contributions described below. First, in light of the renewed interest in social safety net programmes (APP) that has arisen in the wake of the publication of the "Common Minimum Program" by the

United Progressive Alliance (UPA), there is an urgent need for an analysis of these programmes that makes use of the most recent facts. 3 In certain instances (for example, public works, grain distribution, and school scholarship programmes), existing programmes are being revised. As a result, a study that documents the lessons learned from the previous programme is required to inform the design and implementation of new and upcoming programmes. In other instances (such as the Targeted Public Distribution System, Integrated Child Development Services, and Social Assistance), very few design modifications are anticipated, and enhancing the effectiveness of existing programmes will be critical to accomplishing the goals that have been set forth. Second, very few studies have focused on the problems of service delivery that are experienced by households in the state of Uttar Pradesh, which is the largest state in India and has a population of almost 170 million people (only six countries in the world have larger populations). Uttar Pradesh is home to 19 percent of India's population that is considered to be living in poverty.

The following is the structure of this paper: The poverty and precariousness of the situation in UP will be discussed in the next section, which will provide context for the study that will follow. Following that, we will discuss our verdict for the following three major categories of programmes: Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), school scholarship programmes, and school grain distribution programmes are examples of the types of programmes that fall into the following categories: programmes to help the chronically poor, programmes to help mitigate risks by facilitating income smoothing (Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana – SGRY), and programmes that help promote movement out of poverty (Targeted Public Distribution System – TPDS, social assistance schemes). Following this, there is a section that discusses the targeting approach that is implemented in a variety of programmes, namely the ration card system. After that is a quick conclusion, followed by some policy implications.

Poverty in Uttar Pradesh

This section provides an overview of the challenges posed by poverty for people of the UP, so laying the groundwork for an examination of social safety net programmes and the impact they have. It is possible that the numerous facets of poverty, including geographical isolation, a lack of education, poor health, lack of agency, and so on, will play a significant part in deciding the degree to which programmes are successful. The social safety net programmes are in no way meant to be the primary approach for reducing poverty in practically any area; rather, this section provides background information on situations in UP that are undoubtedly significant for the provision of services.

This study employs per capita total household expenditures as a measure of household wellbeing. This metric takes into account expenditures made by households on all types of goods and services, as well as imputed expenditures made by households on the consumption of their own product. 5 In the state of Uttar Pradesh (UP), all of the families were categorised into welfare quintiles depending on the amount of expenditure within urban and rural regions separately. This was done with the intention of capturing distributional impacts. 6 In other words, we solely utilise metrics of "relative poverty" as opposed to "absolute poverty" in this particular piece of research.

OBJECTIVES

1. A Study On The Social Programs Of Uttar Pradesh
2. A Study Uttar Pradesh Government With A Reference To Meerut

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

UP's economy has been growing, which has helped to alleviate poverty there, but the state is still home to approximately 19 percent of India's underprivileged people. 8 Between 1993–1994 and 2002–2003, the per capita nominal net state domestic product increased from Rs 5,066 to Rs 10,289, representing a doubling from the previous level. This growth has resulted to a fall in poverty rates, which have gone from 40.9 percent in 1993/94 to 29.2 percent in 2002/03 when computed using the official methodology of the Government of India Planning Commission (Table 1). 10 During the same time period, poverty rates decreased in rural regions, moving from 43.3 to 28.5 (-4.3 percent per annum), while the decline was more moderate in urban areas, going from 35.4 to 32.3 percent (-1.0 percent per annum).

These reductions in poverty rates are occurring at a pace that is slower than what has been observed in the rest of India. 11 In spite of this, the reduction in poverty rates in UP has resulted in 10.5 million fewer persons being designated as poor (from 59.3 million in 1993/94 to 48.8 million in 2002/03). According to these data, economic expansion in the UP between 1993-1994 and 2002-2003 was in fact advantageous to low-income individuals, with particular advantages accruing to those living in rural areas.

Table 1: Poverty in UP

	Population	1993-94 Poverty head count (%)	Absolute #of poor (million)	Population	2002-03 Poverty head count (%)	Absolut e #of poor (million)
Rural	117.02	42.3	49.5	134.74	28.5	38.4
Urban	28.21	35.4	9.9	33.89	32.3	10.3
Overall	144.99	40.9	59.3	167.12	29.2	48.8

Disparity in terms of welfare is relatively low in UP and has been declining, although there is significant inequality in terms of welfare across both geographical and caste groups. The Gini index of monthly per capita expenditures among households in the UP had a value of 0.282 in 2002-2003, which represented a decrease from the previous year's value of 0.305. The low Gini value demonstrates that Uttar Pradesh (UP) has a benefit distribution that is equitable, and in fact, it is somewhat more egalitarian than the Gini for all of India. 12 Nevertheless, this fall in the Gini coefficient is consistent with the finding that nominal per capita household expenditures grew by 109 percent for the poorest decile and by 62 percent for the richest decile correspondingly throughout the course of the study period. Generalized Lorenz curves are computed in order to rank social wellbeing across different socio-economic groups. This ranking is done by using per capita household expenditures as a measurement of long-term household welfare (Figure 1).

The eastern part of the state, which has the fewest people living in metropolitan areas and the most inhabitants, is also the most impoverished (top-left). The South, which only has 8 million inhabitants, is the most prosperous area in the country. There is no way to objectively compare the standard of living of the 65 million people living in the Western area to that of the 30 million people living in the Central region. The disparity in wealth between rural and urban regions is significant (top-right). Last but not least, the rankings of household welfare across castes demonstrate that Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) (25 percent of the

population) are less well off than Other Backward Castes (OBCs) (50 percent), and that Other Backward Castes are, in turn, significantly less well off than non-backward castes.

In addition to material indicators of human development, there is evidence to imply that poverty is pervasive throughout the state of Uttar Pradesh, to a greater extent than in many other regions of India. According to the most recent census, which was conducted in 2001, the literacy rate in UP was 57 percent, but the literacy rate for all of India was 65 percent.

15 Gross enrollment rates in primary schools are also significantly lower than the average for most states in India. In the primary levels of education, the gross enrollment rates in the state of UP (India) are around 91 (95) percent, and they are 47 (61) for grades 6 through 8. 16 Even in terms of health, the state does not fare well. The infant mortality rate in Uttar Pradesh (India) is about 82. (66). 17 The state has one of the highest maternal death rates in the country and is among the highest in the world. It is the state with the highest rate in the country. In 1997, there were 707 maternal deaths during or close to childbirth for every 100,000 live births in the state of UP. This compares to an overall ratio of about 408 for all of India.

The challenges that are encountered in UP are complicated by the significant heterogeneity that exists not only within the state but also across geographic areas, caste groupings, and between men and women in the indicators of non-material poverty. For instance, the PSMS II Report indicates that the literacy rate in UP in 2002-03 is 59.7 percent; however, this conceals the reality that only 50 percent of the people in the lowest third and 69 percent of the population in the richest third are literate. Or, in rural regions, 83 percent of children aged 6 to 15 living in the wealthiest third of the welfare distribution are enrolled in school, while only 67 percent of children living in the lowest third of the welfare distribution are enrolled in school.

DATA ANALYSIS

As the case in many other regions of India, the unpredictability of both income and expenditure levels contributes to numerous instances of temporary poverty in UP as well. This instability may be related to a number of predicted (such as seasonal variations in food availability, employment possibilities, and old age) and unanticipated shocks. For example, seasonal fluctuations in food supply, job opportunities, and old age (e.g., natural disasters, death or illness to family members, customary obligations such as weddings and funerals, political instability, disability of the breadwinner). Because they lack the money, possessions, and social relationships that frequently serve as a vital safety net for wealthier households, it is more challenging for poor and nearly destitute households to recover from these kinds of shocks. 20 As soon as households fall into poverty or farther into poverty, it becomes progressively more difficult to escape poverty.

This causes households to remain in what is sometimes referred to as a "poverty trap." In order to investigate poverty and precarious living conditions in India, one research used both qualitative and quantitative methodologies to carry out interviews in 120 villages across 12 districts in the state of Uttar Pradesh and 13 districts in the state of Bihar. 21 The reasons for people's descent into complete and utter deprivation were identified as one of the study's most fascinating discoveries. According to the results of their study, households fell into poverty as a direct consequence of the depletion of either their material or their human resources as a direct result of idiosyncratic shocks. For example, it was more challenging for low-income households to deal with the unexpected expenditures of medical treatment when they experienced a health crisis. These households would be compelled to obtain unsecured loans from either local moneylenders or from homes

belonging to higher castes in order to survive. According to the findings of the study, many of these households are forced to resort to extreme methods in order to survive, such as selling their property, cattle, or farming equipment, or even entering into permanent work contracts.

In the state of Uttar Pradesh (UP), one of the primary reasons for fluctuations in household welfare is bad health, and one way that households deal with such fluctuations is by selling off valuables such as jewellery. Although the NSS is not ideally suited to characterise the types of volatility that households in UP face, it does offer the opportunity to identify households that sold specific assets in order to cope with income volatility. This is despite the fact that the NSS is not ideally suited to characterise the types of volatility that households in UP face. However, it is important to keep in mind that households do not always cope with volatility by selling assets. Households may also cope with volatility by, for instance, removing children from school, borrowing from family or other lenders, getting a second job, and other similar actions, all of which are outside the scope of this definition. Five percent of all families in the UP sold some assets or put them up as collateral for loans in the two years leading up to the poll so that they could pay for unexpected bills or repay loans.

More than forty percent of the households who sold assets or took out mortgages to cover unexpected costs did so because a member of the family became ill, and more than twenty-five percent of all families did so because a member of the household got married or passed away (Figure 2). According to the findings of other research, the responsibility of stabilising the home falls disproportionately on the shoulders of the children and the women. When there is a pressing need to liquidate assets, the first items to be sold are typically those that are utilised by women, such as jewellery and household utensils. We find that households in UP frequently sell jewellery during economic downturns in order to satisfy their immediate consumption requirements. According to the findings of the NSS, 86 percent of households in the UP cover unexpected costs by selling valuables such as jewellery (40 percent), land or houses (28 percent), and animals (18 percent).

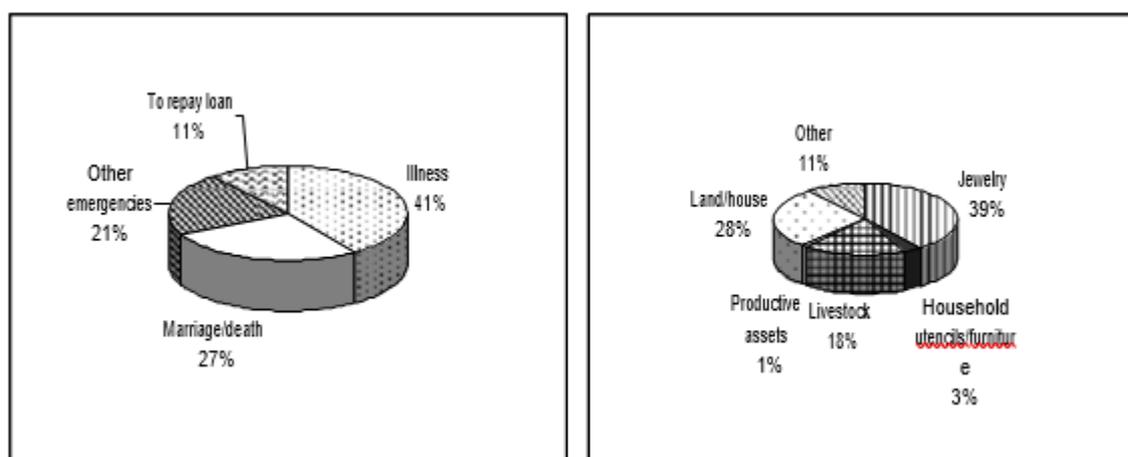


Figure 2 Reasons why families have to resort to selling or mortgaging possessions to cover costs
Assessment of Social Safety Net Programs

The Indian government has a long tradition of enacting a diverse range of social safety net programmes, with the goal of enhancing the quality of life of low-income citizens through either risk reduction or transfer of resources. Although the financing for most of the programmes comes mostly from the Center (often about three-quarters of the total), many of the programmes are within the purview of both the Central government and the State governments. This section examines a variety of social safety net initiatives with regard to how

well they target certain populations and how effectively they boost family welfare. The following are our considerations while choosing programmes:

A significant number of the social safety net initiatives that have been put into place in UP have extremely low coverage rates, which suggests that exclusion mistakes are of a very significant magnitude. A good example of this is the fact that fewer than one percent of people in the population receive aid from any of the social assistance programmes. Even with its focused approach, the public distribution system only helps roughly 15 percent of those with Below Poverty Line (BPL) cards. The school scholarship programme (which has a coverage rate of 57 percent) and the school grain distribution programme (which has a coverage rate of 47 percent) are the only exceptions to the general pattern of low coverage (27 percent).

The number of recipients coming from low-income families is disproportionate. Six of the programmes for which adequate data are available demonstrate that the proportion of welfare recipients coming from the bottom 40 percent of the distribution is greater than the proportion coming from the top two quintiles. This is the case for all six of these programmes.

The initiative is helping homes that are not considered to be poor, despite the fact that there are significant inclusion mistakes. In the case of the TPDS, the old age pension scheme, and the school grain distribution programmes, the poorest forty percent of the welfare distribution make up forty percent of the programme recipients.

The number of people who have benefited from the programme who come from SC/ST families is higher than the number of people who come from other caste groups. The participation percentage of SC and ST students in relation to the overall participation rate in programmes ranges from 122 percent in the case of the ICDS programme and the school grain distribution programme to 223 percent in the case of the school scholarship programme. The higher rate of programme coverage among SC/ST can be partially explained by the deliberate targeting that some programmes employ, but it can also be explained by the fact that many SC/STs have characteristics, such as low asset ownership and high incidences of poverty, that increase their chances of participating in programmes.

There is a significant amount of geographical variance in programme coverage, which suggests that the efficiency of service delivery may vary from location to location. These geographical inequalities in the provision of social safety net programmes are more pronounced with regard to the public works projects and the public distribution networks that are specifically targeted. Even among programmes with the least amount of geographic variation in coverage rates, such as the ICDS and school scholarship programmes, the difference between the highest and lowest incidence rates is approximately 140 percent. This disparity exists despite the fact that these programmes have the least amount of geographic variation in coverage rates.

Even for low-income homes, many of the programmes have very little of an effect on the overall wellbeing of the household. Because of the low value of the transfer, the programmes that have extensive coverage, such as the school scholarship and grain distribution programmes, boost the household welfare of a hypothetical home that falls in the 20th percentile by less than 1.3 percent. The fact that participants in the public works schemes (SGRY) have only earned salaries for a few days of the year in practise is the primary reason for the limited influence that these programmes have had on the welfare of households. On the other hand, the social assistance programmes have a tendency to offer larger transfers to beneficiaries

(approximately 12 percent of the household welfare of a hypothetical household in the 20th percentile for old age pensions, disability benefits, and widow pensions), but as was mentioned earlier, coverage rates are extremely low.

Table 2: A review of the results of UP's social safety net

TPDS	15.0%	18.5%	15.8%	19.0%	347.0%	7.0%
Old age pension	0.8%	0.9%	0.8%	1.4%	232.0%	12.0%
Disability allowance	0.1%					12.0%
Widow pension	0.0%	0.6%	0.7%	1.2%	185.0%	12.0%
Maternal benefits	0.0%					4.0%
School scholarship	27.3%	32.5%	19.7%	61.0%	143.0%	1.3%
Grain distribution	46.8%	48.5%	46.6%	57.3%	157.0%	0.5%
ICDS	9.5%	11.0%	7.5%	11.6%	139.0%	
SGRY	1.3%	1.6%	1.1%	2.8%	380.0%	3.8%

The number of people who are eligible for benefits expressed as a percentage of the total population is known as the coverage rate. These populations are as follows: for the TPDS, it is the number of BPL card holders who purchased grain from the fair price shops in the 30 days preceding the survey; for the old age pension, disability allowance, widow pension, and maternal benefits, it is all households; for the school scholarship and grain distribution programmes, it is the number of children between the ages of 5 and 18 who are receiving the benefit; for the ICDS, it is the proportion of children between the ages of 0 and 6 who are receiving.

CONCLUSION

It is necessary to conduct reliable and regular monitoring and assessment, and in this regard, there are some issues that need to be resolved. For instance, significant variances in the results obtained when monitoring the SGRY programme through the use of muster rolls and when monitoring the programme through household surveys imply that there is a requirement for an improvement in the methodology for measuring the outcomes of programme participation. A difficulty that is connected to the issue of monitoring and evaluating the programmes that the government is responsible for is the fact that the lessons learned from earlier studies are not leading to significant improvements. That is to say, the feedback mechanisms that should be in place to ensure that great experiences are repeated while preventing bad ones from being repeated are absent. One good example of this would be the Targeted Public Distribution System. It is quite possible that it is one of the programmes that has been researched the most in the entire globe; nevertheless, the findings from those studies have not been put into practise. Nevertheless, there are indications that the administration is working towards the implementation of certain constructive changes. Once again, the

adoption of the NREGA is crucial, since it provides a tangible signal that the government plans to improve upon the many workfare programmes that are now in place. However, it is still too soon to give a conclusive judgement on how successfully the measures have been implemented.

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