

## HUMAN RIGHTS APPROACH IN POVERTY ALLEVIATION PROGRAMMES IN TAMIL NADU

S. Gunasekaran\*

### ABSTRACT

*The present paper focuses on the extent of human rights approach in the implementation process of various Poverty Alleviation Programmes (PAPs) in Tamil Nadu. The study was carried out on a sample of 900 beneficiaries of various PAPs selected from three different districts of Tamil Nadu. The adoption of human rights approach was measured based on a set of human rights indicators developed for each of the PAPs. The opinion of women beneficiaries on each of the indicators was placed on a three-point scale ranging from 0 to 2. A score of 2 was given for the presence of an indicator mostly, 1 for sometimes and 0 for never. The results of the study indicate that the level of adoption of human rights approach was highest at 93 per cent in Public Distribution System (PDS) followed by Swarnajayanthi Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) (66 per cent), Indira Awas Yojana (IAY) (65 per cent) and Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) (37 per cent). The PDS has performed well with higher level of adoption of human rights approach whereas the SGSY and IAY have succeeded to a considerable extent and SGRY has performed badly with the very low level of adoption of human rights approach. The findings strongly suggest the need for the adoption of human rights approach for the success of the anti-poverty programmes.*

### Introduction

In the year 2000, representatives of 189 nations including 147 Heads of State and government gathered at the United Nations for a historic Millennium Summit. The Summit adopted an ambitious set of goals, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Achieving them by the target date of 2015 will transform the lives of the world's people, including reducing by half of the number of people living in extreme poverty (UNFPA, 2003).

India is on a fast track to economic growth with an annual growth rate of 8 per cent. Though growth has been seen viable, the trickle down theory of Simon Kuznet (1969) has not done any magic. When Mahbub Ul Haq (1976) wrote his 'Poverty Curtain', he advised the nations to take care of Gross National Product (GNP), so that it will take care of everything. However, this could not happen as around 300 million people

in the world are living on less than a dollar a day. Inequalities between rural and urban areas are widening and the regional imbalances are deepening. The gap between men and women are also widening and one has to fear whether a big social divide is taking place.

Although recent positive economic developments have helped the Indian middle-class a lot, India still suffers from substantial poverty. The National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) estimated that 22.15 per cent of the population was living below the poverty line in 2004-2005, down from 51.3 per cent in 1977-1978 to 25 per cent in 2002 in India.

As of 2006, India's Human Development Index is 0.611, higher than that of nearby countries like Bangladesh (0.530) and Pakistan (0.539), but lower than Vietnam (0.709) and China (0.768) (United Nations, 2006).

\* Reader, Department. of Applied Research, Gandhigram Rural University, Gandhigram-624 302, Tamil Nadu.

Since the early 1950s, government has initiated, sustained and refined various planning schemes to help the poor. These Poverty Alleviation Programmes (PAPs) in India are of two types. The first one is the welfare programmes for the poor and the other is the programmes for economic and social justice. The welfare programmes are mostly concerned with transfer of income through payments, doles and relief measures either in cash or kind. It is one thing to redistribute the generated income and another thing to redistribute the factors through institutional and structural changes which will raise the income-earning power, capability and ultimately participation in decision making. Thus, people should be assured with economic freedom and to assure this, the anti-poverty programmes should be in the nature of improving their income-earning power, their capabilities and their asset position, implementing participatory development programme and ultimately enabling them to participate in the process of decision making. In view of this, poverty removal and employment generation have become the two main pillars of planning in India. In correspondence to this thrust, a number of poverty alleviation and employment generation programmes have been initiated by the Government of India (GoI), through the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), keeping gainful rural employment and productive assets/infrastructure creation as the primary goals. As most of these direct Poverty Alleviation Programmes are being implemented with minimum consideration on the human rights aspects, these programmes often failed and could not make any tangible impact on the living conditions of the poor, particularly women in rural areas. The human rights approach to development demands: (1) participation and transparency in decision making (participation of all stakeholders); (2) non-discrimination (equity and equality); (3) empowerment and (4) accountability of actors (United Nations, 2004).

Against this background, the present paper attempts to assess the extent of human rights approach adopted in the process of imple-

menting various poverty alleviation programmes in Tamil Nadu.

### **Objectives**

- i. To study the extent of Human Rights Approach adopted in the implementation process of various Poverty Alleviation Programmes;
- ii. To study the problems and bottlenecks in the adoption of Human Rights Approach in the implementation of poverty alleviation programmes aimed at relieving women from poverty in rural areas; and
- iii. To suggest suitable strategies to integrate human rights approach to poverty alleviation programmes.

### **Methodology**

The present paper is based on the data collected for an UNESCO-sponsored research project on 'Integrating a human rights approach to poverty alleviation programmes in Tamil Nadu'. The data were collected during February – June 2006 from three districts of Tamil Nadu viz., Villupuram, Vellore and Thiruchirapalli representing high, moderate and low poor districts, respectively as per the Tamil Nadu Human Development Report, 2003.

Data were collected from 300 women beneficiaries of PAPs and 50 Self-Help Group leaders in each of the selected districts through personal interview. Thus, a total of 900 women beneficiaries of various PAPs and 150 Self-Help Group leaders were interviewed. Of the 900 women, 733 were beneficiaries of Swarnajayanthi Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY), 160 were beneficiaries of Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY), 334 were beneficiaries of Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY) and all of them were beneficiaries of Public Distribution System (PDS).

Information was collected from the women SHG leaders and beneficiaries of various poverty alleviation programmes on the extent of human rights approach adopted in the implementation of poverty alleviation

programmes. In this regard, a set of indicators on various aspects of Human Rights Approach was developed for each of the PAPs and the beneficiaries were asked about the opinion on the extent of the presence of the Human Rights Approach on each of the selected indicators and the results were placed on a three-point scale as 'mostly', 'sometimes' and 'never'. A score of two was given for 'mostly', one for 'sometimes' and 0 for 'never'. Finally, the overall performance of each programme in adopting the Human Rights Approach was assessed based on the total score obtained on each of the selected Human Rights Approach indicators for each of the PAPs.

The human rights aspects considered in this study are: (1) Dissemination and access to information; (2) Transparency; (3) Participation in decision making; (4) Freedom of expression; (5) Equality and Non-discrimination; and (6) Accountability.

## RESULTS

The anti-poverty programmes considered in this study are: SGSY, SGRY, IAY, and PDS. The results of the analysis of data on the extent of Human Rights Approach (HRA) adopted in the implementation process of these PAPs are presented in the following sections.

### Swarnajayanthi Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY)

The extent of the adoption of Human Rights Approach in the implementation process of the SGSY programme was assessed based on the opinion of the SHG leaders and the beneficiaries of the SGSY programme. In the SGSY, the implementation process involves two stages viz., (1) Government to Self-Help Groups and (2) Self-Help Group to its members. Hence the leaders of the SHG were interviewed and their opinion was assessed on the adoption of rights' approach in the programme implementation. Besides the leaders, the beneficiaries were also interviewed and their opinion on the adoption of HRA in the implementation of the programmes was assessed.

### Opinion of SHG Leaders on the Rights Approach at Government Level:

The SHG leaders were briefed about the Rights' approach to development and asked about their opinion on the presence of Rights' approach in the implementation of SGSY programme by the government. The results presented in Table 1 revealed that dissemination of information about the programme details were mostly followed at all stages of the programme as reported by 78 per cent of leaders. Nearly three-fourths (73 per cent) of the leaders reported transparency being mostly followed. Participation in decision-making was mostly present at all stages of the programme as reported by nearly three-fourths of the leaders (75 per cent). Freedom of expression was mostly followed in the implementation of the programme as reported by about three-fourths of the leaders (73 per cent). Just seven per cent of the leaders had reported that discrimination is mostly present in the implementation process and only one-third of leaders (34 per cent) had reported the presence of accountability most of the times in the implementation process. Majority of leaders felt that accountability of both government and banks are much needed. The government acts as though 'its' role is over once the application is processed and handed over to banks.

The leaders were of the opinion that these agencies must come forward to empower the beneficiaries through skill training, advocacy and counselling for undertaking independent economic activities, procuring raw materials and marketing.

The performance of the programme in adopting the HRA as perceived by the SHG leaders scored an overall performance of 76 per cent of the expected level. Thus, it is seen that the programme implementation was fairly better in adopting HRA. The accountability of the Government has however to be improved and the discrimination has to be minimised, according to the SHG leaders.

**Table 1 : Percentage distribution of SHG leaders according to their opinion on the extent of human rights approach adopted in SGSY programme by the government**

S.No.	Human Rights Issues	N	Adoption of HRA			Score		
			Mostly	Sometimes	Never	E*	O*	P*
1	Dissemination	150	78.0	20.0	2.0	300	264	87.9
2	Transparency	150	72.7	26.0	1.3	300	267	89.0
3	Participation and decision making	150	74.7	24.7	0.6	300	261	86.9
4	Freedom of expression	150	72.7	26.0	1.3	300	257	85.7
5	Discrimination	150	6.7	38.7	54.6	300	78	26.2
6	Accountability	150	34.0	61.4	4.6	300	235	78.3
	Total					1800	1362	75.7

\* E=Expected O=Observed P=Per cent

**Rights Approach at Self-Help Group Level:** The results of the analysis of data on the opinion of SHG leaders on the extent of Human Rights Approach adopted by the group in the implementation of economic assistance programme are presented in Table 2. It is found that dissemination, access to information and transparency were mostly present in the implementation of

the programme by the group as reported by most of the SHG leaders (93-97 per cent). Participation in decision making, freedom of expression are reported to be mostly present according to around 90 per cent of SHG leaders. Non-discrimination was mostly present in the implementation of the programme as reported by 80 per cent of leaders.

**Table 2 : Percentage distribution of SHG leaders according to their opinion on the extent of human rights approach adopted in the implementation of SGSY programme by the groups**

S. No.	Human Rights Issues	N	Adoption of HRA			Score		
			Mostly	Sometimes	Never	E*	O*	P*
1.	Dissemination of information	150	96.7	2.0	1.3	300	293	97.7
2.	Access to information	150	96.0	4.0	—	300	294	97.9
3.	Transparency	150	93.3	6.0	0.6	300	293	97.7
4.	Participation	150	88.7	11.3	—	300	283	94.3
5.	Freedom of expression	150	92.0	8.0	—	300	288	95.6
6.	Equal opportunities to all members	150	82.0	17.4	0.6	300	272	90.7
7.	Democratic way of selecting leaders	150	89.4	10.6	—	300	284	94.7
8.	Equality and non-discrimination	150	80.0	20.0	—	300	270	90.0
9.	Help to improve the economic status	150	53.4	46.0	0.6	300	229	76.3
10.	Help to get employment opportunity	150	51.4	48.0	0.6	300	226	75.3
11.	Help to improve the status of women	150	54.7	45.3	—	300	232	77.3
12.	Help to improve the self-reliance of women	150	54.7	44.7	0.6	300	231	77.0
13.	Easy access to credit facilities	150	82.0	18.0	—	300	273	90.9
14.	Help to get adequate standard of living	150	58.0	42.0	—	300	237	79.0
15.	Accountability	150	88.7	10.7	0.6	300	282	94.0
	Total					4500	3987	88.6

\* E=Expected O=Observed P=Per cent

Only half of the group leaders had reported that the SGSY programme is mostly helpful to get employment opportunities and improve the economic status of the family. SGSY programme was mostly helpful to improve the status of women and improve their self-reliance according to 55 per cent of leaders. SGSY mostly facilitated women's access to credit facilities as reported by 82 per cent of leaders. Only 58 per cent of women leaders reported that SGSY mostly helped women to attain adequate standard of living. Accountability was reported to be mostly present in the implementation of the programme mainly in the repayment of loan as reported by 89 per cent of leaders.

The overall performance was 89 per cent of the expected score according to the group leaders. Thus, the group leaders opined that the Human Rights Approach is mostly followed in the implementation of the poverty alleviation programmes at group level. The Human Rights components such as dissemination and access to information, participation, non-discrimination and accountability were mostly present in the SGSY at group level. However, nearly one-third of the leaders reported that the SHGs were not always helpful to get employment, so as to improve the economic status and standard of living of the family.

**Opinion of the Beneficiaries of SGSY :** The opinion of the beneficiaries on the adoption of Human Rights Approach in the implementation of SGSY programme is presented in Table 3. Most of the beneficiaries (more than 80 per cent) reported that equality and non-discrimination (in the selection of beneficiaries for economic assistance and distribution of benefits) were mostly present at all stages of implementation of the programme. Non-discrimination in the selection of beneficiaries for training was reported to be mostly present for 56 per cent of beneficiaries. Three-fifths of beneficiaries reported that dissemination of information about programme details and access to information were mostly present in the programme implementation. Two-thirds of beneficiaries reported that freedom of expression was possible for most

of the time in the implementation of the programme. About 61 per cent of the beneficiaries reported that participation in decision making was mostly present in the programme implementation.

Opportunity for self-employment / income generating activities and opportunity for adequate standard of living were reported to be mostly available for nearly half of the beneficiaries in the SGSY programme. Only half of the beneficiaries reported that transparency and accountability were present mostly in the SGSY programme. A little over half of the respondents (55 per cent) felt that the benefits availed through SHGs helped them to take decisions most of the times in the family. Nearly half of the beneficiaries felt that the status of women in the family increased mostly due to the SGSY programme. However, most of the respondents did not agree to many of the human rights components related to self-reliance, group action, economic independence, participation in group activities and politics and instilling confidence among women. According to the beneficiaries, the overall performance of the adoption of human rights approach in the implementation process of various PAPs under SGSY was only about 66 per cent of the total expected score.

The results indicate the need for improvement in the adoption of Human Rights Approach in the implementation of SGSY programme. The programme details are to be disseminated through various media and personal communication. Efforts should be made to make the programme more transparent in administration, monitoring and evaluation. People's participation in decision-making is very low and the accountability of the government is also very low. Most importantly, more efforts to improve the indicators related to women's self-respect, women's economic and political independence are needed.

#### **Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY)**

The opinion of the beneficiaries on the extent of human rights approach adopted in the implementation of SGRY programme is

**Table 3 : Percentage distribution of beneficiaries according to their opinion on the extent of human rights approach adopted in the implementation of SGSY**

S. No.	Human Rights Issues	N	Adoption of HRA			Score		
			Mostly	Sometimes	Never	E*	O*	P*
1.	Equality and non-discrimination in							
	a. Selection of beneficiaries for economic assistance	733	81.2	17.2	1.6	1466	1316	89.7
	b. Distribution of benefits	733	84.4	14.2	1.4	1466	1342	91.5
	c. Selection of beneficiaries for training	733	56.1	39.8	4.1	1466	1114	75.9
2.	Inform the programme details	733	57.7	41.3	1.0	1466	1149	78.3
3.	Access to information	733	59.8	39.4	0.8	1466	1165	79.5
4.	Freedom to express views	733	66.9	31.1	2.0	1466	1210	82.5
5.	Participation in decision making	733	60.7	36.2	3.1	1466	1155	78.8
6.	Opportunity for adequate standard of living	733	50.3	47.7	2.0	1466	1088	74.2
7.	Opportunity for self-employment / income generating activities	733	46.8	51.0	2.2	1466	1060	72.3
8.	Transparency at all stages	733	51.6	46.1	2.3	1466	1094	74.6
9.	Accountability	733	51.5	46.5	2.0	1466	1095	74.7
10.	Respect for members in the group	733	44.3	50.9	4.8	1466	1023	69.8
11.	Improvement in self-respect	733	39.4	55.6	5.0	1466	984	67.1
12.	Self-effort and self-reliance among women	733	28.6	63.9	7.5	1466	887	60.5
13.	Able to speak in public	733	19.8	50.6	29.6	1466	661	45.1
14.	Fostering spirit of cooperation among women	733	20.9	69.6	9.5	1466	816	55.7
15.	Promoting awareness	733	21.7	70.8	7.5	1466	837	57.1
16.	Instilling confidence	733	19.5	74.4	6.1	1466	831	56.7
17.	Decision making in the family	733	55.1	42.0	2.9	1466	1116	76.1
18.	Increase in women's status in the family	733	47.9	46.0	6.1	1466	1039	70.9
19.	Free from economic dependence	733	33.7	58.8	7.5	1466	925	63.1
20.	Providing opportunities to women in productive work	733	30.3	61.5	8.2	1466	895	61.0
21.	Providing opportunities to acquire skills	733	28.4	59.6	12.0	1466	853	58.1
22.	Came out of cultural taboos	733	33.9	54.9	11.2	1466	901	61.5
23.	Opposing practices followed against women's interest	733	20.6	52.3	27.1	1466	685	46.7
24.	Able to participate in political activities	733	19.8	32.0	48.2	1466	525	35.8
25.	Group action	733	32.2	47.1	20.7	1466	817	55.7
26.	Able to participate in Gram Sabha	733	35.3	49.3	15.4	1466	879	59.9
27.	Contest election	733	14.6	31.2	54.2	1466	443	30.2
	Total					42514	27905	65.6

\* E=Expected O=Observed P=Per cent

presented in Table 4. It is observed that only 44 per cent of respondents had reported the presence of equality and non-discrimination in the selection of beneficiaries for the programme. Discrimination in the allotment of work and payment of wages was mostly present as reported by a majority of beneficiaries. Nature of work was mostly acceptable only to 13 per cent of beneficiaries. It is a sad commentary to note that nearly four-fifths (79 per cent) of beneficiaries

had reported that foodgrains have been never supplied to them. Most of the beneficiaries reported that they were neither given information nor had access to the details of the programme. Overall, the results based on the opinion of the beneficiaries on the implementation of SGRY programme revealed that the adoption of human rights approach in the programme was inadequate and the procedures laid down for the implementation of the programme have not been strictly adhered.

**Table 4 : Percentage distribution of beneficiaries according to their opinion on the extent of human rights approach adopted in the implementation of SGRY**

S. No.	Human Rights Issues	N	Adoption of HRA			Score		
			Mostly	Sometimes	Never	E*	O*	P*
1.	Equality and non-discrimination in							
	a. Selection of beneficiaries	160	43.8	39.4	16.8	320	203	63.4
	b. Allotment of work (Gender-wise)	160	49.4	38.0	12.6	320	219	68.4
	c. Payment of wages	160	17.5	60.6	21.9	320	153	47.8
2.	Nature of work is acceptable	160	13.1	53.8	33.1	320	128	40.0
3.	Provision of foodgrains	160	3.1	17.5	79.4	320	38	11.9
4.	Given details about programme	160	6.3	36.9	56.8	320	79	24.7
5.	Inform the terms and conditions of the programme	160	6.3	25.0	68.7	320	60	18.8
6.	Inform the allotment of foodgrains for the programme	160	15.0	17.5	67.5	320	76	23.8
7.	Only BPL beneficiaries selected for the work	160	18.8	33.1	48.1	320	113	35.3
8.	Beneficiaries are also members of the monitoring committee	160	8.1	37.5	54.4	320	86	26.9
9.	Use of machineries for work	160	21.9	55.0	23.1	320	162	50.6
10.	Involvement of middleman / contractors	160	30.6	40.0	29.4	320	158	49.4
11.	Getting regular employment	160	7.5	51.2	41.3	320	106	33.2
12.	Increase in per capita income	160	5.0	61.3	33.7	320	114	35.6
13.	Improvement in economic conditions	160	5.0	59.3	35.7	320	111	34.7
14.	Help to avoid debt from moneylenders	160	5.0	56.9	38.1	320	107	33.4
15.	Creation of Assets at							
	a. Community level	160	16.9	35.6	47.5	320	111	34.7
	b. Family level	160	5.6	54.4	40.0	320	105	32.8
	Total					5760	2129	36.9

\*E=Expected O=Observed P=Per cent

The overall performance on the adoption of human rights approach in the implementation of SGRY was just 37 per cent of the total expected score. As the adoption of human rights approach is very low in the implementation of

SGRY programme, perhaps, the programme has not fully achieved its objective of providing additional and supplementary wage employment to the needy people living below poverty line.

### Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY)

The opinion of women beneficiaries on the extent of adoption of human rights approach in the implementation of IAY programme is presented in Table 5. It is found that equality and non-discrimination were mostly present in the selection of beneficiaries and allotment of house according to nearly two-thirds of beneficiaries. Equality and non-discrimination in the provision of money and material were reported by only 59 per cent of beneficiaries. Only 27 per cent of beneficiaries reported that access to information was mostly followed in the programme. Thus, a majority of beneficiaries were neither given information nor had access to information about the programme details. Just 12 per cent of beneficiaries reported that the implementation of the programme was mostly transparent while the remaining 88 per cent reported either "sometimes" or "never". Most of the beneficiaries (93 per cent) reported that they had no right

to express their views fully. Participation in decision-making was mostly followed according to just 4 per cent of beneficiaries. Majority of the beneficiaries had not agreed fully for many of the human rights issues related to payment of money and materials for the construction of house.

Overall, the extent of human rights approach adopted in the implementation of IAY was 65 per cent of the total expected score. The results indicate that though the IAY scheme provides shelter for the people living below poverty line, lack of dissemination of information, non-involvement of beneficiaries in decision-making process, lack of transparency and lack of accountability reduce the quality of the houses constructed under IAY. As a result, many of the houses constructed under IAY were not fully utilised by the beneficiaries and many of them were in depilated condition within a short period of time.

**Table 5 : Percentage distribution of the beneficiaries according to their opinion on the extent of human rights approach adopted in the implementation of IAY**

S. No.	Human Rights Issues	N	Adoption of HRA			Score		
			Mostly	Sometimes	Never	E*	O*	P*
1.	Equality and non-discrimination in							
	a. Selection of beneficiaries	334	64.7	31.7	3.6	668	538	80.5
	b. Allotment of house	334	66.2	31.7	2.1	668	548	82.0
	c. Provision of money and material	334	59.3	35.3	5.4	668	514	76.9
2.	Dissemination of information	334	26.6	65.6	7.8	668	397	59.4
3.	Access to information	334	27.2	66.8	6.0	668	405	60.6
4.	Transparency	334	11.9	73.9	14.2	668	327	48.9
5.	Right to express views freely	334	6.6	80.5	12.9	668	313	46.8
6.	Adequacy of money for the construction of house	334	14.9	69.8	15.3	668	333	49.9
7.	Satisfaction of housing design	334	55.4	33.5	11.1	668	482	72.2
8.	Received full amount of money and material	334	29.0	54.8	16.2	668	377	56.4
9.	Received money and material in time	334	30.8	55.4	13.8	668	391	58.5
10.	Construction fully completed and satisfactory	334	43.7	46.1	10.2	668	446	66.8
11.	Opportunity for creating assets	334	44.9	52.2	2.9	668	474	70.9
12.	Opportunity to get adequate shelter (in terms of space)	334	62.9	35.6	1.5	668	539	80.7
	Total					9352	6084	65.1

\* E=Expected O=Observed P=Per cent



**Public Distribution System (PDS)**

In the PDS, essential commodities are supplied through ration card to the beneficiaries and most of the people rely on the PDS to fulfill their basic requirement of food. They mostly

fall below poverty line category. They do not have adequate income to buy commodities outside the PDS. The BPL people regularly buy the commodities from PDS. The prices of the commodities are comparatively very low and as per the directions of the Government.

**Table 6 : Percentage distribution of members of BPL families according to their opinion on the extent of human rights approach adopted in the Public Distribution System**

S. No.	Human Rights Issues	N	Adoption of HRA			Score		
			Mostly	Sometimes	Never	E*	O*	P*
1	Easy access to information	900	94.0	5.5	0.5	1800	1742	96.8
2	Always available	900	90.4	9.1	0.5	1800	1710	95.0
3	Stock availability displayed	900	85.8	13.6	0.6	1800	1667	92.6
4	Able to get the commodities regularly	900	88.4	10.7	0.9	1800	1688	93.8
5	Adequate stock in all times	900	85.6	12.3	2.1	1800	1651	91.7
6	Getting commodities regularly	900	87.9	10.3	1.8	1800	1675	93.1
7	Prices are as per government directions	900	98.0	1.8	0.2	1800	1780	98.9
8	Prices of commodities reasonable	900	98.0	1.9	0.1	1800	1781	98.9
9	The quality of commodities are good	900	65.3	32.6	2.1	1800	1469	81.6
10	Helps to free from hunger	900	77.2	22.2	0.6	1800	1590	88.3
11	Helps to save money	900	78.8	20.6	0.6	1800	1604	89.1
12	Helpful to improve the economic status	900	72.0	26.7	1.3	1800	1536	85.3
13	Discrimination in supply	900	0.7	7.7	91.6	1800	1717	95.4
14	Face ill-treatment	900	0.6	1.2	98.2	1800	1778	98.8
	Total					25200	23388	92.8

\* E=Expected O=Observed P=Per cent

The results of the analysis of data on the extent of human rights' approach adopted in the implementation of PDS presented in Table 6 revealed that access to information in PDS was very high as reported by 94 per cent of beneficiaries and 90 per cent reported that the commodities are mostly available always. More than 85 per cent of beneficiaries reported that stock availability is mostly displayed, adequate stock available in all times and mostly able to get commodities regularly. Most of the beneficiaries (98 per cent) reported that the prices are as per the government direction and are also reasonable. Only two-thirds of beneficiaries had reported that the quality of commodities are mostly good. More than three-fourths of beneficiaries felt that the PDS is very much helpful to free them from hunger, save money and improve their economic status.

Interestingly, the overall performance of the programme on the adoption of human rights approach in the implementation of PDS is very high. The performance score was 93 per cent of the total expected score. Thus, the PDS is functioning well with the adoption of human rights approach and is a successful programme in removing hunger and improving the economic status of the poor families according to the beneficiaries.

Assuring adequate food is the basic fundamental right of any citizen and thus, the scheme safeguards the most important human rights viz., right to live or right to existence. The results indicate that except in case of quality of goods, all basic human right components are fully followed in the implementation of the programme. The most important human right

viz., free from hunger is well implemented in this State and definitely any improvement in terms of quantity or quality or less price will definitely improve the living conditions of poor and will help in strengthening the basic fundamental right viz., the right to live.

This subsidised programme has to continue without any flaw till the other basic human right viz., "right to have gainful employment" is fully implemented so as to guarantee adequate income to all the marginalised people.

### **Conclusion**

The extent of human rights approach adopted in the implementation of various poverty alleviation programmes was assessed based on a set of human rights indicators developed for each of the PAPs.

Most of the PAPs examined in this study have created employment, empowered the beneficiaries to achieve their basic entitlements and to some extent assets have been created under IAY. The skill formation and skill up-gradation have been effectively done under the SGSY. The basic right of 'right to live' has been taken care by the Public Distribution System.

Almost all components of human rights approach have been mostly followed in the process of implementation of PDS which results in fully achieving the aims of the programme. The working of SGSY and IAY has succeeded to a considerable extent and still there is a need to strengthen the programme with the adoption of Human Rights Approach. The functions of SGRY performed badly as the adoption of Human Rights Approach was very low in the programme.

The results suggest the need to improve the implementation process of the poverty alleviation programmes with the incorporation of rights approach at every stage of implementation. There is lack of commitment both on the part of government officials and the elected bodies in allowing the beneficiaries to participate in the decision-making process. The programme planners and the implementing authorities are to be sensitised about the need to adopt the rights approach for the successful implementation of various poverty alleviation programmes in India.

The study has clearly brought forth an important finding that the anti-poverty programmes have succeeded wherever the human rights approach has been adapted to a greater extent. The lack of accountability on the part of government agencies such as block development officials, bank officials happened to be most important lacuna and hence these officials have to be sensitised on human rights approach to development.

The stakeholders viz., the existing SHGs and the beneficiaries of various PAPs have to be organised so as to enable them to insist on their rights, right to work, right to express, right to information and ultimately, right to live as other human beings.

Thus, the information system has to be developed for the poor and an awareness campaign has to be made to make them realise their rights and duties. Any type of government intervention can succeed only, if people participate at every stage of the programme and hence rights' approach to development is more essential.

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