

## CONCEPTS AND NATURE OF FOOD SECURITY IN INDIA: STUDY IN HEALTH GEOGRAPHY

**Dr. Sachin Adinath Rajguru**

HOD, Department of Geography

S.S.A's Arts and Commerce College, Solapur

### Abstract

Concepts and Nature of Food Security in India in Health Geography, Food in India providing adequate food grains to the people is an important objective of economic planning in most of the developing countries of the world. It is necessary not only to produce enough food, but also to distribute the food properly among all the people in the society. That is why the Second World Food Conference held at The Hague in 1970 opined that unless the minimum food requirements of every individual are met, the individual cannot appreciate the importance of financial planning. Therefore, it will be almost impossible for any developing country to achieve human welfare, social justice and democracy without adequate food.

Food security refers to ensuring adequate food supply to people, especially those who are deprived of basic nutrition. Food security has been a major concern in India. According to UNO -India, there are nearly 195 million undernourished people in India, which is a quarter of the world's hunger burden.

**Keywords:** Food Policy in India, Elements of Food Security System, Concepts and Nature of food security in India.

### Introduction:

Food security means adequate food supply to those people who are deprived of basic nutrition. Food security has been a major concern in India. According to the United Nations, there are about 195 million undernourished people in India, which accounts for a quarter of the global hungry. About 43% of children in India are chronically malnourished.

After independence in 1947, however, the government took some measures to solve the food grain problem. For this, the government appointed the Foodgrains Policy Committee in September 1947. The committee recommended abolition of controls on food grains. The recommendations of the committee have not been implemented even after a long period of time. In the case of foodgrains, the policy of deregulation led to the adverse effects of the

government's dismay. It was impossible to buy enough food grains. In such a situation, the government was forced to import more grains from abroad. Due to this, India's dependence on essential commodities like food grains increased.

### **Concepts of food security**

Food security is a flexible concept as reflected in the many attempts at definition in research and policy usage. Even a decade ago, there were about 200 definitions in published writings. Whenever the concept is introduced in the title of a study or its objectives, it is necessary to look closely to establish the explicit or implied definition

The initial focus, reflecting the global concerns of 1974, was on the volume and stability of food supplies. Food security was defined in the 1974 World Food Summit as:

‘Availability at all times of adequate world food supplies of basic foodstuffs to sustain a steady expansion of food consumption and to offset fluctuations in production and prices’.

In 1983, FAO expanded its concept to include securing access by vulnerable people to available supplies, implying that attention should be balanced between the demand and supply side of the food security equation:

‘Access of all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life’.

The 1996 World Food Summit adopted a still more complex definition:

‘Food security, at the individual, household, national, regional and global levels when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life’.

This definition is again refined in The State of Food Insecurity 2001:

‘Food security is a situation that exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life’

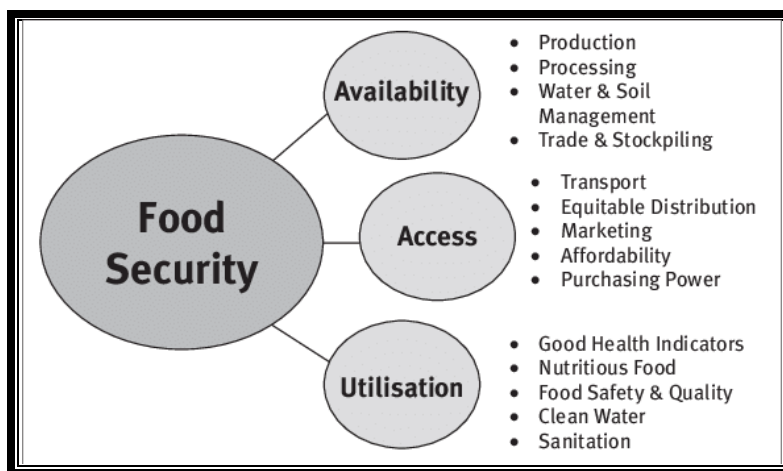
### **Food Policies of India:**

Before World War I, India was a net exporter of food grains. But later that situation started to change. Burma became independent from India in 1935. India became independent in 1947 and due to partition; the problem of food grains became more serious. After partition, nearly 80 percent of the population was included in India. But India's share of land under major food grains was only 75 percent. India lost good quality irrigated land in Punjab. The

loss of Sindh reduced cotton production. Overall, the condition of food grains seems to have worsened during pre-independence and post-independence period of partition.

Economic planning started in the country after 1951. The main objective of the government was to reduce the dependence on other countries in terms of food grains. That is why self-sufficiency in food grains was the main objective of the first five-year plan. During this period foodgrain prices in India began to decline from 1953 onwards as the overall natural conditions remained favourable. During the First Five Year Plan period, foodgrain prices fell by about 25 percent. Development of agriculture was given priority. Therefore it was possible to produce enough food grains during this period. In the year 1970-71, the production of food grains was 108.4 million tonnes. It was considered that the country has become self-sufficient in terms of foodgrains as foodgrains have been produced somewhat satisfactorily. It was also believed that the import of food grains from America could be completely stopped.

Since the fifth five year plan, however, the government has taken many steps regarding the development of agriculture. In terms of crops, there was a huge increase in income. New technology started to be used in agriculture. Irrigation and finance were provided for agriculture. At the same time, various corporations were established at the state level. In today's situation cold storages are being built for perishable agricultural produce. Arrangements are also being made to check the quality of agricultural produce and stamp it accordingly (Agmark) and also to provide various services for sale. In this way, comprehensive measures are being taken to increase productivity and production faster by investing capital.



**Elements of Food Security System:**

- 1) Demand for food grains increases with increasing population. To fulfill it, to increase the domestic supply of food grains to ensure adequate food supply for all.
- 2) Declaring minimum base prices for food storage and proper distribution. This will give relief to the farmers. Even if the supply increases and the prices fall, the farmers will not suffer. Because they will get the base prices announced by the government.
- 3) Implementation of public distribution system.
- 4) Stocking adequate amount of food grains to remove the temporary shortage of food grains caused by natural calamities. If the government takes appropriate steps in this regard, hoarding can be prevented.
- 5) Encouraging the production of food grains in the country as well as providing maximum access to food grains to the poor by providing proper combination of food grains distribution and employment.

Planning started after independence. During the implementation of the first five-year plan, a serious food problem had arisen in the country. The price of food grains started increasing rapidly. But almost all Five Year Plans have given priority to the agriculture sector, which has led to an improvement in food grain production. In the last 70 years, food grain production in India has increased almost four times. Therefore, the seriousness of the food grain problem in the country has reduced to some extent. But since Indian agriculture is dependent on Nisagas, the production of non-grains fluctuates. Overall, it would not be wrong to say that India's food grain production has improved since the planning period. A review of food production in India after independence Table no. 1 is shown.

**Table no. 1**

Sr. No.	year	Net production of food grains (million tonnes)	Per capita, availability of food grains (grams)
1	1951	48.1	315.0
2	1961	72.03	468.7
3	1971	9 4.8	468.8
4	1981	113.5	454.8
5	1991	154.8	510.1
6	2001	132.5	416.2

7	2005	162.1	422.4
8	2022	315.7	515.0

Reference: Economic Review 2021-22

Table no.I, it is clear from 1 that in 1951 the production of food grains in the country was 48.1 million tons. It will increase to 162.1 million tons in 2005. At the same time, in 1951, the daily per capita availability of non-grains was 395 grams, which increased to 422 grams in 2005 And today 2022 increase Net production of food grains, Per capita, availability of food grains from this, it can be seen that the country's food grain production has increased due to reasons such as the beginning of economic planning after independence, the importance given to the agricultural sector in the five-year plans.

### Nature of Food Security in India

#### 1) Effectual Nature:

In today's situation, although there has been a considerable increase in the food grain production of the country, there has not been any significant change in the growth of the country's food grain production in proportion to the growing population. In 1951, the per capita availability of food grains was 395 grams. It increased to 416 grams in 2001. But in 1951 the population of the country was 36.11 crores; in 2001 it increased to 102.87 crores. In this 50-year period, the increase in the availability of food grains compared to the population, however, appears to be very less.

#### 2) Qualitative Nature:

Not only in terms of quantity, but also in terms of nutritional principles, there is a deficiency in the availability of food grains in India. Realistically, a balanced diet should contain 3000 calories per person per day. But the diet in India which is a balanced diet provides only 2000 calories and the diet of people in India is dependent on non-nutritious grains like millet, millet and maize. That is, there is a lot of lack of wheat, rice, milk, fruits, eggs, vegetables etc. in the diet. So that they cannot buy such food grains. In short, the quality of food grains in India is not very good.

#### 3) Distributive Nature:

Another important reason for low food availability in India is the ineffective distribution system. This problem arises due to non-availability of proper price, market price and non-distribution of food-grain at the right time in the country. Whatever policies are

planned by the government regarding the distribution of food grains, proper prices, proper prices and sales, the policies are not fulfilled due to the improper management of the administration. Dr. K. N. According to Raj, 'Actually, although there is not much shortage of food grains in the country, lack of foresight and administrative malpractice of the government leads to lack of food grains. Also, most of the time illegal stockpiling of food grains creates artificial scarcity. This shows the importance of distribution pattern of food grains in the country.'

#### **4) Financial Nature:**

The economic nature of food grains is also important. Compared to the increase in the price of food grains in the country, the increase in income is less. India's low per capita income has made it difficult for families below the poverty line to even get two meals a day. It would be fair to say that India became self-sufficient in food-grain production when the common man in India, at a reasonable price according to his income, could get enough of the food-grains necessary for his happy life from the country's food-grain production.

#### **Summary**

After independence many measures were taken to solve the food problem. In all Five Year Plans, the goal of becoming self-sufficient in food grains was set. The revolution in the country in 1966 led to reforms in the agricultural sector of India. Due to new technology in agriculture, use of weed seeds, irrigation facilities, the production of food grains increased from 50 crore tonnes in 1950-51 to 20.92 crore tonnes in 2006-07. India achieved self-sufficiency in food grains only in 1976 and thereafter the country's imports remained nominal. In the Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002) it is clearly mentioned that the women's efforts in the foodgrains in the country is to create a food security system, so that there will be no crisis of drought and epidemic in the country.

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