Impact of Social Protection Programme through VDBs in alleviates Rural Poverty in Nagaland: A Macroeconomic Approach

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Abstract

Understanding the relationship between macroeconomic policies and rural poverty still remains a key policy challenge. This study builds a fundamental framework to connect important macroeconomic factors with rural poverty and evaluates the impact of government-led development expenditure policies that have had a direct impact on rural poverty during the past two decades. In order to ensure inclusive growth in the social protection programme, it is necessary to address the needs and ambitions of this disadvantaged section of population. Employing the data produced from household surveys, National Sample Survey Organization, Statistical Handbook, carried out a social protection programme through descriptive statistics and linear regression model. The results show that the prevalence of poverty in rural sector has significantly decreased from 10% in 2004-05 to 6.10% in 2011-12 but shows positive increase in 2021-22 to 12.75%. Therefore, the government must implement effectively the social protection programme so that the there will be increase the level of income and thus help in reducing income inequality. Also, suggested that proper physical and social overhead capital i.e., infrastructure need to developed and priority be given in the rural sector.

Keywords: Social Protection Programme, Village Development Boards, Rural Poverty

1. Introduction

Since statehood on 1st December 1963, reducing unemployment and rural development has been one of the main objectives of economic planning, and the process has been sensitive to the demands of the poor population. As a result, development initiatives have focused on providing services and establishing appropriate means of subsistence for the poor. It is well known that poverty in Nagaland is a result of several deprived factors, including low literacy rate, lack of skill and training among the workers, low level of income, lack of basic necessities including food, clothing, medicine, drinking water facility, and proper sanitation (Jamir and Ezung 2017a; Jamir, and Ezung 2017b; Jamir, 2019b; Jamir 2020a; Jamir, 2021a). As these disadvantages are linked, only an inclusive approach model can end poverty and guarantee that human resources are used to their full potential for sustainable development. If properly executed, well-designed social protection programmes to reduce poverty could not only support growth, effects on reducing poverty but also encourage economic growth that benefits the poor population in rural sector (Jamir 2020b; Jamir, 2021b; Jamir, 2021c; Jamir, 2022a; Fan, et. al., 2000). The main problem of rural poverty results either due to non-availability of high nutrition food, lack of work and unemployment among the rural youth, or due to shocks such as ill health or natural disaster (Agenor, 2005; Datt and Ravallion 1997; Galor and Zeira 1993). There are several social protection programmes to reduce poverty that have existed for a very long time. Over time, the programmes

have been enhanced, integrated, expanded, and updated. Direct cash transfers to the targeted groups, wage employment programmes, self-employment programmes, and public distribution systems are the four basic categories into which the targeted programmes fall. The Ministry of Rural Development under the Government of India administers a large number of centrally sponsored schemes in the first three categories, although the states implement them, with the states typically contributing 25% of their cost. Many programmes have been implemented due to the multidimensionality of poverty, the heterogeneity of the poor and interstate differences in the effectiveness of the state's delivery system.

Linking macroeconomic determinants to poverty reduction is a difficult and challenging task from the policy perspective. The evidence in the poverty literature is mixed with claims that economic growth path in under developed areas has been pro-poor growth (Dollar and Kraay, 2002). On the contrary, studies have shown that re-distributive measures can help more directly reduce poverty anytime it rises, particularly in the wake of a crisis (Alesina and Rodrik, 1994; Dagdeviren et al., 2002; Agenor, 2004; Storm, 1994). The pricing policies and public spending on the poor (providing public goods directly targeted at the poor; providing opportunities for the poor such as education, health care, housing, water supply, electricity, and sanitation) have a direct impact on poverty, whereas macroeconomic policy's indirect effects on poverty are caused by its impact on economic growth on various macroeconomics determinants. Hence, the notion that growth is required for reducing poverty but may not be adequate if the requisite development policies are not in place continues to dominate the literature (Mallick, 2001). There is a need to establish macroeconomic policies that have distributional and allocation qualities when it comes to economic development as a long-term objective.

Village Development Board: A model for rural development in Nagaland

The Village Development Board (VDB) is a legislative body that reports to the Village Council. The institution of the VDBs, which are equivalent with the concept of decentralized grass root level planning in Nagaland, was first established by A.M Gokhale, the Deputy Commissioner of Phek district on December 8th 1976 in Ketsapomi village which is about 13 km away from Phek town (see fig. 1&2). However, on seeing the success of the Ketsapomi VDB, a widespread push to spread the reach of this unique institution throughout the state was started in 1980. By adopting the VDB Model Regulations in 1980, the state formally recognised and institutionalised the VDB. By the end of 2017, 1238 recognised village in the state had the VDB organisation, after first establishing its structure in 1976 (Jamir, 2019a). As part of their duties in the village, the VDBs take part in all stages of developmental initiatives. They include accepting the financial resources, selection of beneficiaries or schemes, monitoring of works and expenditure and completion of schemes. The allocation is made on the basis of number of households of every village in proportion to the size of each village to ensure that each citizen of the state is equally involved and provided for in all rural development activities. Through the involvement of VDBs, several major schemes have been successfully implemented (see fig. 7&8).

Panoramic view of Ketsapomi village: First VDB village in Nagaland and India
Source: Photo by Chubakumzuk Jamir

Fig. 1

Fig. 2

2. Data and Model specification

Estimated of Monthly Per-capita Consumption Expenditure (MPCE)

The definition of poverty and its measurement has been the source of intense debate in the literature (Zheng, 1997; Banerjee and Duflo, 2007). The most important tool for monitoring poverty has been the monthly household consumer expenditure surveys conducted by the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO). The monthly per capita consumption expenditure at the national level was ₹ 972 for rural areas during 2011-12 and the average per capita consumption expenditure per person per day was ₹ 32.4 for rural areas at 2011-12 prices which are shown in table (refer table 1) below. For Nagaland the average monthly per capita consumption expenditure was ₹ 1229.83 for rural areas during the same period, and the average per capita expenditure per day was ₹ 40.99. The sample survey estimates of monthly per capita consumption came out to be ₹ 2190.22 for rural areas during 2021-22, and the average per capita expenditure per person per day was ₹ 73. In comparison to Nagaland MPCE at 2011-2012 prices calculated by National Sample Survey Organisation, the field survey on MPCE at 2021-22 prices is higher mainly due to the price inflation of essential food and non-food items and also increase in income of the people due to various government sponsored plans (Planning Commission, 2014). The expert group report maintain that household consumption spending is more reliable than income and therefore better suited to measure poverty. Therefore, when determining poverty, the MPCE is used as a proxy for real income (Jamir 2021b).

Table 1: Estimation of monthly per-capita consumption expenditure in rural sector

Category	Income	Average per-capita
National MPCE (at 2011-12 prices)	972.00	32.40
Nagaland MPCE (at 2011-12 prices)	1229.83	40.99
Sample Survey MPCE (at 2021-22 prices)	2190.22	73.00

Source: NSSO Report 2010 and Field survey report, 2021-22

Head Count Ratio (HCR)
The headcount ratio measures the proportion of the population that is poor. But it does not indicate how poor the poor are (Watts, 1968; Sen, 1979). Let 'n' denote the total number of people in the community and 'q' the number of people below poverty line. The Head Count Ratio (H) if then,

$$H = \frac{q}{n}$$

Among the various methods used to measure poverty with this NSS data, the head count index (HCI) has been commonly used as the standard indicator of the extent of income poverty. This index was used as a proxy for poverty in order to examine the effect of pro-poor policies that directly influence poverty after accounting for the effect of sectoral distribution of growth and terms of trade.

Linear regression model
Linear regression was used to analyse the impact of social protection program on employment, and income. The general functional forms of the model to point out dependent and explanatory variables are given as linear regression model estimation approach is adopted to obtain the coefficients.

Linear regression analysis
In the regression model, Y has normal distribution with mean

$\quad$ $Y=\beta_0+ \beta_1X_1+ \beta_2X_2+ \beta_3X_3+\ldots\ldots.. \ldots+ \sigma (Y)$,
$\quad$ sd $(Y) = \sigma$ (independent of X's)

The model parameters $\beta_0 + \beta_1 + \beta_\rho$ and σ must be estimated from data.

$\quad$ β_0 = intercept
$\quad$ $\beta_1\, \beta_\rho$ = regression coefficients
$\quad$ $\sigma = \sigma res$ = residual standard deviation

In the equation $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_{11} + +\beta_\rho X_\rho$

$\quad$ β_1 equals the mean increase in Y per unit increase in Xi , while other Xi's are kept fixed.
$\quad$ The estimation method follows the least squares criterion.
$\quad$ If $b_0, b_1, ,\ b\rho$ are the estimates of $\beta_0, \beta_1, ,\ \beta_\rho$ then
$\quad$ the "fitted" value of Y is
$\quad$ Y fit $= \beta_0+ \beta_1X_1+ \beta_2X_2+ \beta_3X_3+ \beta_\rho X_\rho$

3. Results and Discussion

$\quad$ Poverty in Nagaland is characterized by unequal distribution of land, unemployment, low level of income, lack of skill, poor rural infrastructure and unavailability of timely credit to rural poor. Nagaland is an agrarian state, where the small and marginal farmers comprise the largest share of over 80% of farm output in the state. As per the plan budget of the Rural Development Ministry was 631.18 lakh for SGSY scheme in 2009-10, and the number of SHGs financed during the same year was 587 and the Swarozgaris under SGSY was 845 (refer table 2&3). Under SGSY transfers of fund are based on the share of each state in the total number of rural poor. SGSY took off only in those states where a fair amount of ground work had already been done towards formation of self-help groups, especially in mobilizing rural women under Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA). The regression results evidence no significant changes in swarozgaris assisted and SGSY during 2009-10 (*p*=0.205). Also, regression analysis show significant change in SHGs assisted and SGSY in the same period (*p*=0.00) (refer table 5).

The objective of MGNREGA was to improve livelihood security in rural areas along with creating of durable assets such as construction of roads, footstep, culvert/drainage, playground, water tank, retaining wall etc. The fund allocation under MGNREGA during 2009-10 was ₹ 49945.76 lakh which further increases to ₹ 63131.24 lakh during 2016-17. MGNREGA guarantees employment to households and not to individuals as result 421037 lakh households were provided employment during 2016-17 (refer table 2&3). As per the report out of 4.25 lakh active job card holder in Nagaland only 46,894 workers have Aadhaar linked bank account. Wages of the MGNREGA workers will be directly credited to the individual accounts of job card holders who have actually done the works on the basis of ₹ 177 per day as daily wage (see fig. 3,&4). No, doubt it was found that under MGNREGA participation also appear to be high and help in reducing poverty more effectively in less developed areas than in more developed areas. The results of linear regression found that MGNREGA show highly significant $(p<0.00)$ in reducing poverty from 2009-10 to 2021-2022 (refer table 4,5&7).

Construction of Model village road 5th Mile
Chumoukedima district (2021-2022)
Source: Photo by Chubakumzuk Jamir

Construction of minor irrigation channel under
MGNREGA (2012)
Khriezephe village under Chumuokedima block
Source: Photo by Moameren Pongen

Fig. 3

Fig. 4

Table 2: Implementation of centrally sponsored scheme   (in Lakh)

Heads	2009-10	2016-17	2021-22
SGSY	631.18	00.00	0.00
MGNREGS	49945.76	63131.24	60167.00
NSRLM	00.00	54444484.00	2895.34
IAY	3139.32	782.42	0.00
PMAY-G	0.00	0.00	2225.792
BRGF	588644001	00.00	0.00
Total	588697717.3	54508397.33	

Source: Statistical Handbook of Nagaland, 2010, 2011, 2017, 2018 & 2022
Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY), Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY)
Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS)
Nagaland State Rural Livelihood Mission (NSRLM), Backward Region Grant Fund (BRGF)

Table 3: Physical achievement under various schemes   (in Lakh)

Heads	2009-10	2016-17	2021-22
No. of SHGs (under SGSY)	587.00	0.00	0.00
No. of Swarozgaris	845.00	0.00	0.00
Job card holder (under MGNREGS)	325242.00	429018.00	433532
No. of Household provided Employment (under MGNRES)	325242.00	421037.00	418387
No. of SHGs (under Nagaland State Rural Livelihood Mission)	0.00	1339.00	12537.00
IAY (CGI Sheet in Bundles)	11691.00	591.00	0.00
PMAY-G	0.00	0.00	5900

Source: Compiled from Statistical Handbook of Nagaland, 2010, 2011, 2017, 2018, 2021 &2022

Training on Package of Practices by NSRLM, Longleng, organized in 2024
Source: Photo by Chubakumzuk Jamir

Training for SHG by Agriculture Department and supply of agri related tools at Tamlu village organized in 2024
Source: Photo by Chubakumzuk Jamir

Fig. 5

Fig. 6

The aim of the NSRLM is to promote sustainable livelihood for the poor such that they come out of extreme poverty. The poor people are intended to facilitate (i) access to credit supply (ii) support for diversification and strengthening of livelihood and (iii) access to entitlements and public services. In Nagaland the mission in its fifth year of implementation shows tremendous progress in achieving its objective (see fig. 5&6). The increase level of participation from women and youth towards the program through SHGs and their improved capacity through continuous nurturing and training in enabling women to initiate sustainable and strong community institution to participate in the growing economy of the state. The state mission is moving towards achieving adequate human capital which will be available to address issues of poverty in the state. The fund under the noble scheme during 2016-17 was ₹ 54444484.33 lakh and the number of SHGs established under the scheme was 1339 during the same year (refer table 2&3). However, the regression analysis show significant change in SHGs assisted under NSRLM who participated in generation income and self-employment (p=0.00).

For IAY, share in housing shortage is given 50% weightage (increased to 75% w.e.f 2005-2006), and poverty gets the remaining weightage. From out of the state financial resources, allocation of funds to the districts is based on an index of backwardness. Two indicators are used for working out the index of backwardness, namely, the proportion of poor population of the district to the total population in the state and the inverse of agricultural production per agricultural worker with equal weightage assigned to each of the two indicators. For IAY the budget allocation was ₹ 3139.32 lakhs and decline to ₹ 782.2 lakh during 2016-17. In Nagaland under the IAY scheme the department's decision to provide 5 bundles of CGI sheets to the beneficiaries without any other assistance resulted in denial of full housing benefit to the rural people as they were forced to arrange other materials required to complete the construction of their houses. The department, however, stated on August 2002 that other materials viz, timber, bally post and bamboo etc. were provided free of cost by Village Council/Village Development Board from community forest. Out of ₹ 3139.32 lakh being cost of CGI sheet during 2009-10 payment for 11691 bundles of CGI was made by the department and decline to 591 bundles during 2016-17 (refer table 1&2). The relationship between variables is statistically significant $(p<0.00)$. The target groups of beneficiaries were below poverty line (BPL) families as well as homeless people of the state.

The scheme of Backward Region Grant Fund (BRGF) has been implemented by the Directorate of Under Developed Areas till June 2007 which however transferred to Rural Development Department by the State Planning Board in its meeting held on 29-06-07. It is planned to re-establish regional imbalances in Nagaland comprises of Kiphire, Shamator, Longleng, Mon, Tuensang and Noklak, Wokha, Peren, Phek and Zunheboto in development activities. The fund will provide financial resources for supplementing and coverage existing development inflows into indentified districts. This programme will be implemented in the selected district on the same line of the VDB Grant-in-Aid programme. Thus, the fund meant for Rural Development of rural areas will be allocated to the VBDs on the basis of household. This fund will be released to VBDs saving accounts by District Planning Committee.

Water tank under Functional Household Tap Connection Fifteenth Finance commission (FHTC XV FC 2020-21) work done by VDB Pongo, RD Block Sakshi, Longleng
Source: Photo by Mongnyei Phom

Installation of solar street light at Pongo village, Longleng
Source: Photo by Mongnyei Phom, Field Assistant

Fig. 7

Fig. 8

The aim is to review the performance of macroeconomic impact of social protection scheme during the period from 2009-10 to 2016-17, and discuss the extent to which the performance of anti-poverty scheme since the Ninth-Five Plan. The programmes selected are: Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY), Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), Nagaland State Rural Livelihood Mission (NSRLM) and Backward Region Grant Fund (BRGF). Although the constitution of India does not decree any significant role for the central government in poverty alleviation programmes, such schemes have been a part of the Government of India budget right from the early 1970s. These were basically of three types; (i) schemes to promote self employment (ii) creating new work opportunities for wage labour and (iii) the third category focused on backward areas of the regions. The increase in the allocation of the Rural Development Ministry over the last 8 (eight) years is part of the general strategy of Government of India to transfers to the state via the Central Ministry at the cost of general purpose transfer via NITI Aayog. However the allocation of funds to the states under major rural poverty alleviation programmes has been based on the incidence of poverty estimated by NITI Aayog.

Table 4: MPCE and rural poverty in Nagaland

Year	MPCE	% of Rural Poverty Ratios (HCR)	No. of Person (in Lakhs)
2004-05	687.00	10.00	1.70
2009-10	985.00	11.10	0.80
2011-12	1229.83	6.10	1.60
2021-22	2190.22	12.75	1.79

Source: Planning Commission Report, 2014, RBI Report, 2019 and
Field survey report 2021-22

Table 5: Employment and distribution of materials under various schemes for 2009-10

Variables	Correlation		Linear Regression		
	r	R^2	Intercept	Beta	P-value
SHGs assisted under SGSY	0.94	0.88	322113.749	101490.20	0.000
Swarozgaris assisted under SGSY	0.41	0.16	4697598.10	13543.693	0.205
Unskilled labour under MGNREGA	0.85	0.72	1.799E8	0.311	0.001
Semi skill or skill labour under MGNREGA	0.75	0.57	1.634E7	0.052	0.003
Corrugated Galvanised Iron (CGI) under IAY	0.95	0.91	-104.212	4.097E-5	0.000

Source: Authors computation using NSRLM, MGNREGA and PMAY-G from Statistical
Handbook of Nagaland, 2009-10

Table 6: Employment and distribution of materials under various schemes for 2016-17

Variables	Correlation		Linear Regression		
	r	R^2	Intercept	Beta	P-value
SHGs assisted under NSRLM	0.82	0.68	-1.357	2.487E-5	0.001
Unskilled labour under MGNREGA	0.91	0.82	-690.37	0.766	0.000
Corrugated Galvanised Iron (CGI) under IAY	0.63	0.39	36.323	0.245	0.351

Source: Authors computation using NSRLM, MGNREGA and PMAY-G from Statistical
Handbook of Nagaland, 2018

Table 7: Employment and distribution of materials under various schemes for 2021-22

Variables	Correlation		Linear Regression		
	r	R^2	*Intercept*	*Beta*	*P-value*
SHGs assisted under NSRLM	0.85	0.72	-1.620	3.712	0.000
Unskilled labour under MGNREGA	0.92	0.84	574.22	0.412	0.000
PMAY-G	0.70	0.49	73.54	2.056	0.110

Source: Authors computation using NSRLM, MGNREGA and PMAY-G from Statistical
Handbook of Nagaland, 2021-2022

The scheme under performance can be attributed to insufficient fund allocation, consistent late payment of wages, low wage rates and corruption. The poor are also supposed to be largely deprived of basic education facilities as a result the literacy rate of rural regions was 75.35% as per 2011 census. The study found that the low level of education and lack of skill and training in rural areas hampers the development of SHGs activities. The estimated results of linear regression are given in table 6. The coefficient of NSRLM, MGNREGA and PMAY-G is positive, which is highly significant as well. This implies that social protection programs play its due role in income generation, which in turn, reduces poverty. In 2004-2005, Nagaland had a poverty ratio of 10% and further fell to 6.10% in 2011-12. Table 4 shows the field survey descriptive statistics of HCR during 2021-2022 was found to be 12.75% which is quite higher than 2011-12 (Pongen and Jamir, 2021; Jamir, 2021e), the main reason for the sharp increase is due to pandemic. Nagaland, like all low-income state, is particularly vulnerable in a lockdown for three reasons: first, it has a large proportion of households that rely on casual employment in rural sector– about 35%; second, the size of its informal sector, where about 62% of the total workforce contributes to over 30% of its gross domestic product; and third, low median household savings that are inadequate to sustain during lockdown (see fig. 9,10,11&12).

Prevalence of high poverty level in rural sector of Nagaland

Old Pangsha village, Noklak district   Elderly woman in Pongo village, Longleng
Source: Photo by Chubakumzuk Jamir   Source: Photo by Chubakumzuk Jamir

Fig. 9

Fig. 10

Senior citizen in Akhoya village, Mokokchung
Source: Photo by Bendangnaro Phom

Senior citizen in Bura Namsang village Longleng
Source: Photo by Ngepong (Field Assistant)

Fig. 11

Fig. 12

Key issue and challenges relating to the implementation of social protection schemes

1. The daily wage for a local labourer is ₹ 700-₹ 1000 per day where as the daily wage under MGNREGA is ₹ 177 with recent rise. Therefore, one of the issues related to MGNREGA wage is the mere labour wage provided under the scheme which makes the villagers to look for odd job rather than work for project under MGNREGA scheme. As per the field survey report 2021-22, the village council gave contract to group of person to complete the work or use heavy machinery like excavator which is totally against the objective of the MGNREGA scheme (Pongen, 2021).
2. During the field survey 2021-22, it was also found that the MGNREGA scheme there has been many schemes completed or ongoing only on paper. Therefore, the successful completion of programmes under government data is not a true indicator or how the MGNREGA is being implemented (Pongen, 2021). Similar case has been reported by CAG (The Hindu, 2015; Times of India, 2013).
3. During the field survey in some villages it has been brought to light that though money is being directly credited to beneficiary account. The beneficiary has no control over it as they are ask to withdraw and submit it to the village council fund to be utilized for village development like footpath, drainage and other maintenance. Though this helps the village as a whole, but the very objective of MGNREGA gets defeated (Pongen, 2021).
4. There is also the issue of functionality of the assets created under the MGNREGA. For instance, during the field survey, it was observed that most of the project under MGNREGA, like drainage system, concrete waste collection, and others in villages, are done for namesake or has an issue of faulty execution of works leading to non-functionality of such assets. As a result, one of the vital objectives of asset creation under the MGNREGA is getting defeated, resulting in misuse and loss of MGNREGA funds. A similar observation has been highlighted by CAG (The Hans India, 2013).
5. In Nagaland most SHGs remain crowded in low-productivity units, low income, primary-sector activities, mainly agriculture allied sector, and are bogged down by low absorption of technology (Jamir, 2022b; Jamir, 2022c; Jamir, 2022d; Jamir, 2023).

At the same time the programme has not led to diversify into other high-productive activities.

6. The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the functioning of SHGs-the backbone of the NSRLM. The study found that there has been a massive impact on the savings and income-generating activities of these SHGs in the rural sector of Nagaland (Jamir, 2021f).

7. PMAY-G is a centrally sponsored scheme. It has a sharing pattern of 90:10 in Nagaland. Field survey report found that delay their contributions which drastically affects progress. The government needs to ensure the prompt release of the state contribution and direct benefit transfer in the case of central funds on the lines of the MGNREGA.

8. Study found that the IAY was a precursor to PMAY-G, low-quality housing as one of the significant drawbacks of the scheme. Similarly, the 2020 CAG Audit Report on General, Social and Economic Sectors found a compromise in the quality of houses constructed under PMAY-G. The issue that was identified eight years ago in IAY is still pertinent in the case of PMAY-G, the responsibility for the construction of the house rests with the beneficiary and there is no proper supervision of the quality. It is silent on the quality of the houses constructed. Therefore, it is recommended that the government strengthens the quality monitoring mechanisms.

4. Conclusion

Using the data for 2009-10 to 2021-22, this study has investigated the causes of rural poverty in Nagaland, paying particular weight to the role of macroeconomic policy in rural areas. The results show that government spending on productivity enhancing investment, such as rural infrastructure including road, health care, education, irrigation, social forestry, footstep, drainage, playground, water tank, retaining wall etc. and rural development targeted directly to the rural poor, have all contributed to the reduction of rural poverty. The findings show in 2004-2005, Nagaland had a poverty ratio of 10% and further fell to 6.10% in 2011-12, but during 2021-2022 it was found to be 12.75% which is quite higher than 2011-12, the main reason for the sharp increase is due to COVID-19 pandemic. The estimated results of linear regression found that MGNREGA and NSRLM show significant in reducing poverty comparing to other social protection programmes. This paper also suggests about appropriate forward-looking anti-poverty policy interventions, which need to look at, not just who is poor today, but also who is likely to be poor in the future. Therefore, the government must implement effectively income, employment generation and skill enhance programmes such as Mahatama Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, Skill India Mission, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana and Nagaland State Rural Livelihood Mission and also promoting agro-based activities like animal husbandry, bee keeping, poultry etc. so that the there will be increase the level of income and thus help in reducing income inequality. It is also, suggested that proper physical and social overhead capital i.e., infrastructure need to developed and priority be given in the rural areas (Ezung and Jamir, 2018; Jamir, 2021d).

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