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## Poverty In Rural Area Of Jhunjhunu District Of Rajasthan

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### Abstract

This research paper examines the prevailing conditions of poverty in rural areas of Rajasthan, with a focused study on the Jhunjhunu district. Rajasthan, despite its cultural richness and historical significance, faces deep-rooted economic disparities in its rural regions. This paper identifies key causes, evaluates the socio-economic impact of poverty, and analyzes the effectiveness of government schemes implemented to alleviate poverty. Through a combination of primary surveys and secondary data, this paper highlights the challenges and proposes recommendations for sustainable rural development in Jhunjhunu.

**Keywords:** Poverty, Rajasthan, Jhunjhunu District, Rural Development, Livelihood, Government Schemes, Socio-economic Conditions

### Introduction

This study attempts to examine the basic causes of poverty in rural Rajasthan, specifically in the Jhunjhunu district. Through an analysis of the numerous economic, social, and environmental determinants of poverty, this research endeavours to achieve a holistic understanding of the phenomenon. In addition, it will examine the attempts of the government to reduce poverty and raise the income of the poorer sections of society through different schemes and programs. Although there are many government programs, their efficiency in fulfilling the requirements of the rural poor is a cause of concern, and this research will analyze their impact

and implementation issues. Moreover, the study will investigate how poverty influences major areas of life in rural communities, including health, education, and employment, which are central to enhancing the overall quality of life and ending the cycle of poverty.

Poverty is among the most critical socio-economic issues confronting countries all over the globe. It has multi-dimensional implications that hinder human development, economic growth, and social health. Poverty, especially in rural areas, is a very critical problem because of limited infrastructure, job opportunities, and social services, which increases deprivation. Poverty in rural India continues to be a critical problem even after impressive economic growth and numerous government policies.

The state of Rajasthan, famous for its rich culture and historical importance, has a largely rural base population. Yet, there are numerous districts like Jhunjhunu that still experience economic troubles on account of reasons like agricultural dependency, irregular jobs, and social disparities. This chapter discusses in-depth the conceptual approach towards poverty, its evolution historically in India, socio-economic challenges related to rural poverty, and a general overview of the Indian government's poverty alleviation initiatives.

Poverty continues to be a significant barrier to development in rural India. Rajasthan, a state largely dependent on agriculture and livestock, exhibits high disparities in income and access to resources. Jhunjhunu district, though relatively developed compared to some other regions, still reflects issues related to unemployment, illiteracy, and poor living standards in its rural areas. This study aims to explore the multi-dimensional aspects of poverty in Jhunjhunu and understand how it affects the quality of life in rural households.

### **Understanding Rural Poverty in Rajasthan**

Rajasthan, India's largest state by size, offers a multifaceted socio-economic profile based on its historical, geographical, and economic contexts. Even with tremendous economic development over the last few decades, rural poverty is an ongoing issue that disproportionately hits those who are dependent on agriculture and traditional livelihoods. The Rajasthan poverty situation is multifaceted and complex and is shaped by land ownership, climatic conditions, availability of employment, education, and social hierarchies. While cities have experienced industrial growth and infrastructure development, rural areas persist with poverty, poor services, and few economic opportunities. Appreciating rural poverty in Rajasthan means a thorough study of the socio-economic situation, the level of deprivation, the principal causes of poverty, and the rural-urban disparities within the state.

The economy of Rajasthan is largely agrarian, with about 75% of its population living in rural areas. Agriculture and allied sectors like animal husbandry, forestry, and fisheries form the backbone of the rural economy. Nevertheless, the state's unfavourable climatic conditions, including low rainfall, arid and semi-arid regions, and recurrent droughts, pose a major challenge to agricultural productivity. Most of the cultivated land is still reliant on monsoonal rains, and hence agriculture is unpredictable and sensitive to climatic variations.

Although irrigation schemes such as the Indira Gandhi Canal have increased cultivated land, water shortage is a major problem influencing agricultural development and sustainability.

### **Extent of Rural Poverty in Rajasthan**

In spite of numerous government initiatives to reduce poverty, rural Rajasthan remains in severe economic distress. As per statistics from the NITI Aayog's Multidimensional Poverty Index, nearly 30% of the population of the state is multidimensional poor, i.e., they are deprived of income, education, health, and living standards. Rural poverty is nearly double that of urban poverty, which indicates the extreme economic divide in the state.

Districts like Baran, Dholpur, Banswara, and Sirohi are characterized by the highest incidence of rural poverty, with sizeable portions of the population undergoing landlessness, seasonality in employment, and absence of access to public services. Even in comparatively more developed districts like Jhunjhunu, there is a prevalence of poverty in some rural areas among small and marginal farmers, casual laborers, and tribal groups. Though urban Rajasthan has been favoured by the development of industries and the service sector, rural people continue to be reliant on agriculture, which is often plagued by climatic uncertainty and low productivity.

### **Jhunjhunu District: A Socio-Economic Profile**

Jhunjhunu, a district in Rajasthan's Shekhawati region, occupies a special place in the state's socio-economic profile. With its historical value, cultural assets, and contributions to India's defense and industrial bases, Jhunjhunu has a mix of economic development and ongoing rural issues. Although the district has improved literacy, healthcare, and economic diversification, rural poverty is still a threat in view of local imbalances in development. The economy of the district is essentially agrarian, supplemented by increasing presence of industrial and service sector industries, yet the socio-economic imbalances persist among vast pockets of the populace. It is imperative to critically assess the socio-economic profile of Jhunjhunu with thorough scrutiny of its geography, demographics, pattern of livelihoods, and indicators of human development.

Jhunjhunu is situated in the north of Rajasthan and falls within the Shekhawati region, which is famous for its rich history, traditional architecture, and rich cultural heritage. The district is bordered by Churu in the west, Sikar in the south, Haryana in the northeast, and Nagaur in the southwest. Jhunjhunu has an area of around 5,928 square kilometres, which is a moderately sized district in Rajasthan.

The topography of the region is generally semi-arid, with sandy plains, dry riverbeds, and scattered hills. The Aravalli ranges stretch into sections of the district, which affects its landscape. The soil is mostly sandy, which restricts its agricultural potential and requires irrigation for viable cultivation. The district has an extreme climate, with hot summers where temperatures regularly reach above 45°C and cold winters with temperatures below 5°C. Precipitation is rare and extremely irregular, with an average of 400-500 mm per year, rendering the area prone to recurrent droughts.

In spite of these difficulties, Jhunjhunu has been helped by irrigation schemes like the Indira Gandhi Canal, which has enhanced agricultural output in certain areas of the district. Nonetheless, water shortage continues to be an issue of concern, both for agriculture and everyday use. Groundwater over-extraction for irrigation purposes has exacerbated groundwater degradation, and most villages still face difficulties in accessing clean drinking water.

### Objectives of the Study

- To understand the nature and extent of rural poverty in Jhunjhunu district.
- To identify key factors responsible for poverty in rural areas.
- To assess the impact of poverty on education, health, and employment.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of government poverty alleviation schemes.
- To suggest policy recommendations for rural development.

### Methodology

- **Study Area:** Jhunjhunu district, Rajasthan
- **Sample Size:** 100 households selected from 4 villages using stratified random sampling
- **Data Collection:**
  - **Primary Data:** Through household surveys, interviews, and field visits
  - **Secondary Data:** Government reports, NSSO data, Census 2011, scholarly articles

### Socio-Economic Profile of Jhunjhunu District

- **Location:** Northern Rajasthan, part of Shekhawati region
- **Population (2011 Census):** Approx. 2.1 million
- **Literacy Rate:** 74.72%
- **Main Occupations:** Agriculture, military service, daily wage labor
- **Challenges:** Low irrigation, limited industrial activity, seasonal employment

### Causes of Rural Poverty in Jhunjhunu

- **Low Agricultural Productivity:** Due to erratic rainfall and inadequate irrigation
- **Unemployment and Underemployment:** Seasonal and disguised unemployment
- **Lack of Education:** Many rural poor are either illiterate or semi-literate
- **Ineffective Implementation of Schemes:** Leakages and lack of awareness
- **Social Factors:** Caste and gender-based exclusion, especially among SC/ST and women

## Impact of Poverty

- **Education:** High dropout rates, especially among girls
- **Health:** Malnutrition, limited access to healthcare, poor sanitation
- **Migration:** Seasonal migration to cities for labor
- **Living Conditions:** Kutchha houses, no toilets, poor road connectivity

## Government Initiatives in Jhunjhunu

- **MGNREGA:** Employment generation through public works
- **PM Awas Yojana:** Housing for rural poor
- **National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM):** Promoting self-help groups
- **Public Distribution System (PDS):** Food security for BPL families

**Findings:** While these schemes exist, awareness and implementation remain low. Many eligible beneficiaries are excluded due to administrative bottlenecks.

## Key Findings of the Field Study

- 68% of households live below the poverty line
- 45% of families depend on daily wage labor
- 30% of respondents are not aware of any welfare schemes
- Migration is high among youth due to lack of jobs locally

## Recommendations

- Strengthen awareness drives for government schemes
- Promote skill development and vocational training
- Improve irrigation and agricultural facilities
- Increase investment in rural education and healthcare
- Foster rural entrepreneurship through micro-financing and SHGs

## Conclusion

Poverty in rural Jhunjhunu is not just about low income but also about lack of access, opportunities, and empowerment. Addressing poverty requires an integrated approach involving economic, social, and institutional reforms. With focused policy implementation, Jhunjhunu can become a model district for rural development in Rajasthan.

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