



## **Analysis of the Background for the Failures of Poverty Alleviation Programmes Special Reference to Trincomalee District, Sri Lanka**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Poverty is the major problem in the world. In fact, poverty is recognized as the main factor that influences the growth of economy in a country. Apparently, many regions still have the problem of poverty and make effort to reduce poverty. Consequently the scholars found the factors affecting poverty alleviation programmes are community participation, integrative framework, knowledge, stakeholder engagement, network, safety and security, redeployment, state of the programme, legislation and support, governance, political factors, corruption, lack of involvement, communication problems, problems of rural development programme, social sector and poverty, unemployment and the labor market, vulnerability of the poor, poor targeting. The government introduced many poverty alleviation programmes to eliminate the poverty but still the countries have the poverty. It means the programmes do not achieve the target. The independent variables are political factor, involvement, communication and knowledge. The primary data was collected from Divisional secretariats staffs who are directly involved in the poverty alleviation Programmes have considered for this research in the Trincomalee district. There are 11 divisional secretariats in the district. Therefore, 500 questionnaires issued to those divisions in the random sampling method. The analysis shows that political factors have a very strong correlation while communication and involvement has strong correlation. Moreover, knowledge has a negative correlation.

**Keywords:** Poverty, Poverty Alleviation, Poverty Alleviation Programmes

**JEL Classifications:** I32, I38

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Poverty alleviation Programmes have been rooted all over the world but their success has been limited despite all efforts, poverty remains a continuing problem in all developing countries, almost half of the world people living in south Asia. The current poverty is the main problem in the world that recognizes as the main factor that influences for the economic growth of a country. Apparently, many regions still have the problem of poverty and make effort to reduce poverty. However, there poverty level is lower in developed countries than developing countries. In fact, developing countries have the

high level of poverty rate. The Bangladesh has the high poverty rate in South Asia. Sri Lanka has the lowest rate compared with other countries, but rural and urban sectors have the different poverty rates in Sri Lanka. In urban poverty is 13% and rural poverty is 29% in the country. More than 85.3% of the people in Sri Lanka are living in rural areas. According to Central Bank of Sri Lanka (2017), there is a high poverty rate in African region which is recorded 41% by 2013. On the other hand, when considering the poverty rate in South Asia it represents 15% in 2013 and remains in the second-high poverty in the world. The statistics further shows that the poverty has declined from 1990 to 2013 respectively. The poverty gap is the average shortfall

of the total population from poverty line. The measurement is used to reflect the intensity of poverty.

According to the Central Bank of Sri Lanka (2017) the poverty gap registered in 2012/13 was 1.2%. However, when compared with poverty gap in 2006/07 and 2009/10 it is very much low and it is declined continually from the past years. The estate areas had the highest poverty gap compared with other urban and rural areas. In 2006/07 the poverty gap was 6.2 and it's reduced as 1.2 in 2012/13. The main reason for this was government has introduced good poverty alleviation Programmes to reduce the poverty in Sri Lanka. When considering the poverty gap by province it can indicate the different rate of index by each province. The Uva province has the high rate of 2.6% and next to it eastern province shows the second-high value as 2.1% of poverty gap index in the country. The western province has the lowest level of poverty gap index as 0.4%. Sri Lanka's long-term growth compares favorably with developing countries, it falls short of the growth achieved during the last 50 years by the high-performing East Asian economies such as Republic of Korea, Malaysia, and Thailand. This was partly due to policy mismanagement and the war that has continued for 17 years. It was also a case of missed opportunities (Kelagama, 2001).

The Sri Lankan government introduced many poverty alleviation programmes to reduce the poverty in the country. The Janasaviya programme, Samurdhi programme and Divineguma programmes are the major poverty alleviation programmes introduced by the government in the country. These programmes were introduced to eliminate the poverty in the country but still the country is facing poverty. The main problem is those programmes haven't achieved the target that's why the country is still facing the poverty problem (Damayanthi, 2014). The aim of this research is to find out answer to these basic related questions. Why the poverty alleviation programmes failed? How the political factor influenced in the poverty alleviation programmes? How the involvement influenced in the poverty alleviation programmes? How the communication influenced in the poverty alleviation programmes? How the knowledge influence in the poverty alleviation programmes? The conclusion, recommendation is present to the policy makers, head of the department of divisional and district level.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

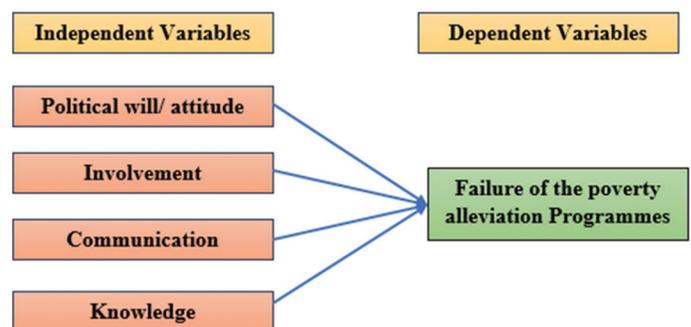
Poverty is the major issue in the developing countries. Many researchers and authors defined poverty in different ways. Poverty is called as deprivation in well-being and includes many dimension. It includes low income and hasn't enough money to obtain the goods and services for the life. And also it includes lack of health and education facilities, low level of clear water and sanitary facilities for better life (Phillip and Rayhan, 2004). Poverty is a multidimensional and a very complex concept that cannot eliminate the single dimension of human life. It includes low income and personal development, lack of facilities of safe water, lack of health, personal security and respect of others (Lima et al., 2011).

For a successful poverty alleviation programme there are many variables influenced in it. Communication, involvement of the

people and top management support are the most important factors effect on the poverty alleviation programmes. If the communication become successful the poverty alleviation programmes also become successfully. If the people or officers increase or decrease the involvement in the particular programme the programme will have the changes (Pathirage, 2015). While knowledge is a crucial element of empowerment, communities need access to a wide range of information. Furthermore, "meaningful participation cannot take place before a community understands what they are to make decisions about." In fact, as pointed out by Ashley et al. the low-level income people have a lack of understanding about the poverty and the poverty alleviation programmes, and changing this state of affairs would be very important to make informed and suitable decisions about their own poverty alleviation development (Lima et al., 2011). All poverty alleviation programs put into operation by the state since 1989 became highly politicized at the implementation stage. This politicized has resulted in two flaws in the programs that in turn have curbed their effectiveness. These are political bias governing the program and poor allocative efficiency of the poverty programme. Genuine poverty alleviation programs have been diluted into vehicles of political patronage at the grassroot level. The current poverty alleviation programme has utilized an extensive network of administrators for identifying beneficiaries and this process has had a political dimension (Kelagama, 2001).

## 3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Conceptualization is the process of taking a construct and refining it by giving it a conceptual or theoretical definition. Instead, the researcher takes keywords in their research question or hypothesis and finds a clear and consistent definition that is agreeing upon by others in the scientific community. The conceptual framework was developed based on literature review. This framework will show the factors effect on poverty alleviation Programmes.



Source: Researcher's Work

### 3.1. Political

The political factor is the most important factor to implement a government programme. If the government implements or delivers a programme the political attitude of the implementers effect positive or negative manner. The attitude comes negative, the programme becomes failure. In other hand if the attitude comes positive the programme becomes success (Pathirage, 2015). In the research, results show that there is a significant relationship between the political attitude and poverty alleviation programmes.

H1: There is a significant relationship between political attitude and poverty alleviation programmes.

### 3.2. Involvement

Involvement is a major important factor to implement a programme. In the programme implementation process involvement is a behaviour, assignment and activities of an officer. According to the Pathirage (2015), the involvement has many views, that the relationship between the programmes and the officers, the responsibilities of the officers, how the officers handle the target of the programme. If an officer increase or decrease those dimensions the programme will have the changes. The result of the research shows there is a significant relationship between the involvement and poverty alleviation programmes.

H2: There is a significant relationship between involvement and poverty alleviation programmes.

### 3.3. Communication

To implement a programme the communication is the most important factor. If the information is shared well it leads the programme to the success if it fails it leads to the programme to failure. The programme failures have been due to the lack of communication, the lack of follow up activities, unclear concepts of the programmes and mismanagement of development programmes, the lack of inter-agency coordination supported by top-down approach and non-participatory approach to development. In the research results show that there is a significant relationship between the communication and poverty alleviation programmes.

H3: There is a significant relationship between communication and poverty alleviation programmes.

### 3.4. Knowledge

Knowledge is the most important factor of empowerment, implementers and communities need access the information. Furthermore, "meaningful participation cannot take place before a community don't understand what they are to make decisions about." Most of the communities have a lack of knowledge about poverty alleviation programmes and haven't enough knowledge, how to develop their programme. Lack of knowledge will affect the implementation of the poverty alleviation programme and the economic development of the country (Alvarez et al., 2015). The result of the research shows there is a negative relationship between the knowledge and poverty alleviation programmes.

H4: There is a negative relationship between knowledge and poverty alleviation programmes.

## 4. RESEARCH PROBLEM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The government has implemented several poverty alleviation programmes such as Samurdhi, Divineguma, Housing Schemes, etc. However, these programmes were unable to achieve its purpose. Hence, these programmes were not eliminating the

poverty in the district, consequently the researcher found that it is a problem on the part of the implementing agency by observing the functions in the project offices (Divisional Secretariat) in Trincomalee District.

Accordingly, families live under the income of 1000/= in the Muthur divisional secretariat are 9725, where most of the people are doing farming and labor work. One of the main reason for the poverty is people have faced many problems in the war period. On the other hand, Town and gravel and Kinniya have 2449 and 2327 families respectively. Moreover, In all divisional secretariats most of the families live under the income rate of 1000-5000 while in the whole district 25971 families get the income above 15000/=. More than 50% of the families get below 10000/= as a monthly income. This is also not enough to live in the current situation. Nowadays all the price for goods and service are very high compare with the past years. Therefore, it has become very difficult to live under low income (Department of Census Statistics, 2016).

The government expended Rs.230 million for 235 rural infrastructure development programmes in the district. And also spent more than 83 million rupees to decentralize capital budget programmes. The government was issuing Samurdhi stamps to the low-income people all over the country. In 2016 government issued Samurdhi stamps to 38190 families in the Trincomalee district and the expense is 71 million rupees. This means most of the people in Trincomalee district live in low income. In 2017, the official poverty line of national level is Rs. 4528. It means the minimum expenditure per person to full fill the basic needs per month in the country. In Trincomalee it shows Rs. 4326 of the poverty line, it's below the national poverty line. Therefore, the people still live in poverty. So there is a problem in the implementation process of the poverty alleviation programmes. This research mainly focus to analyse the background for the failure of poverty alleviation programmes in the district (District Secretariat of Trincomalee, 2016).

The overall aim of this research is to examine the factors for the failure of poverty alleviation programmes in the Trincomalee district. The primary objective of this research is to determine the level of success in poverty alleviation programmes in Trincomalee district. On the other hand, researcher is aiming to determine the relationship between the factors and failure of poverty alleviation programmes in the Trincomalee district and provide the recommendation to the policy makers and head of the department of divisional and district level to make the poverty alleviation programmes in a more successful manner.

## 5. METHODOLOGY

The study uses questionnaires surveys to collect the primary data. The questionnaire consists of questions regarding the poverty alleviation and factors affecting poverty alleviation programmes. In addition, there are questions to collect the information regarding the demographic background of each respondent in a format of Multiple choice. It is necessary to determine the reliability and validity of measurement tools to ensure its accuracy. Thus, reliability and validity of questionnaire has established for this study. Reliability is the measure of getting similar results over

time. The study is focused on Divisional secretariats staff who are directly involved in the poverty alleviation programmes (Grama niladari, Samurdhi managers, Samurdhi development officers, Economic development officers, Technical officers) in the Trincomalee district. There are 11 divisional secretariat in the district and 400 respondents responded to the questionnaires. They were selected by the random sampling method. Random sampling advantages are easy to use and accuracy of the representation.

The researcher used appropriate values for the measurement of the questionnaire. For the questions under demographic factors 1 = Answers in the the lower position and 5 = Answers in the the highest position in order to match the data analysis with the Likert scale. Moreover for the Likert scale questions under section dependent and independent variables are strongly disagree = 1, disagree = 2, Neutral = 3, Agree = 4 as well as strongly agree = 5. The researcher has used MS Office package and SPSS 23 as the data analysis tools. For the data analysis techniques researcher has utilized correlation analysis, collective regression analysis, and descriptive statistics. The mean value is lying in the range of 1-5. Thus the decision rule has been decided as If  $1.0 < x_i \leq 2.5$  denotes dissatisfaction level, If  $2.5 < x_i \leq 3.5$  denotes moderately satisfaction level and If  $3.5 < x_i \leq 5.0$  denotes satisfaction level.

## 6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The primary data was collected from the questionnaire survey and 400 respondents participated in this research study. There are 136 male respondents and 264 female respondents to this study. The majority of the respondents are under the age category of 34-44 years at a percentage of 42% (168), 28% (112) of respondents participated by 21-34 years closely followed by 45-54 years at a percentage of 26% (104) and least participation is from the age group below 21 years at a percentage of 4% (16). In the managerial level of background the respondents are under the divisional level category with a percentage of 78% (312) and 22% (88) of respondents from district level category.

The officers' represents under the working period of 3-6 years with a percentage 42% (168), 30% (120) of respondents have been working for above 9 years. However, there are 24% (96) respondents participated under working period category of 6-9 years and also least participation is from the working period below years at a percentage of 4% (16). As per the results majority of the respondents are under the poverty alleviation programme of Divineguma Programme with a percentage 46% (184), 38% (152) of respondents have been working on Samurdhi Programme and the least participation is from the other poverty programme at a percentage of 16% (64).

Table 1 mention above demonstrates the descriptive analysis in variable wise. It can be perceived that involvement has the maximum mean value = 3.47875 where the respondents given the opinion in neutral aspect. On the other hand, knowledge has the minimum mean value = 3.04375 which is the lowest among other variables. However, respondents have given their opinion neutral involvement and communication as well as poverty alleviation. According to the results all the variables have the moderately

**Table 1: Descriptive statistics**

Variables	Mean	Z std. deviation
Poverty alleviation programmes	3.35812	0.880570
Political factors	3.38500	0.876039
Involvement	3.47875	0.754385
Communication	3.26000	0.728854
Knowledge	3.04375	0.597582

satisfaction level.

Table 2 indicates the correlation analysis between the poverty alleviation programmes and political factors. Through the analysis between the political factors and poverty alleviation programmes have the strong positive relationship with a value of 0.962. Furthermore, the analysis shows the significant (2 tailed) = 0.000 which is lower than the standard value 0.05. Consequently, the analysis shows that the hypothesis "H<sub>1a</sub>: There is a relationship between political factors and poverty alleviation programmes" is accepted.

Table 3 indicates the correlation analysis between the poverty alleviation programmes and involvement. Through the analysis between the involvement and poverty alleviation programmes they have the strong positive relationship with a value of 0.616. Furthermore, the analysis shows the significant (2 tailed) = 0.000 which is lower than the standard value 0.05. Consequently, the analysis shows that the hypothesis "H<sub>2a</sub>: There is a relationship between involvement and poverty alleviation programmes" is accepted.

Table 4 indicates the correlation analysis between the poverty alleviation programmes and communication. Through the analysis between the communication and poverty alleviation programmes either have the strong positive relationship with a value of 0.683. Furthermore, the analysis shows the significant (2 tailed) = 0.000 which is lower than the standard value 0.05. Consequently, the analysis shows that the hypothesis "H<sub>3a</sub>: There is a relationship between communication and poverty alleviation programmes" is accepted.

Table 5 indicates the correlation analysis between the poverty alleviation programmes and knowledge. Through the analysis between the knowledge and poverty alleviation programmes both have the negative relationship with a value of -0.143. Furthermore, the analysis shows the significant (2 tailed) = 0.400 which is higher than the standard value 0.05. Consequently, the analysis shows that the hypothesis "H<sub>4b</sub>: There is no relationship between knowledge and poverty alleviation programmes" is accepted.

Table 6 indicates the regression summary of the study. Accordingly, R = simple correlation which is 0.963 in the study. It defines that there is a correlation in higher level. On the other hand, the R square highlights the total contribution political factors, involvement, communication and knowledge towards the job satisfaction. The analysis further shows R square = 0.927 (92.7%) which has a strong contribution level.

**Table 2: Correlation analysis between poverty alleviation programmes and political factors**

	Poverty alleviation programmes	Political factors
Poverty alleviation programmes		
Pearson correlation	1	0.962
Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
N	400	400
Political factors		
Pearson correlation	0.962	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
N	400	400

**Table 3: Correlation analysis between poverty alleviation programmes and involvement**

	Poverty alleviation programmes	Involvement
Poverty alleviation programmes		
Pearson correlation	1	0.616
Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
N	400	400
Involvement		
Pearson correlation	0.616	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
N	400	400

**Table 4: Correlation analysis between poverty alleviation programmes and communication**

	Poverty alleviation programmes	Communication
Poverty alleviation programmes		
Pearson correlation	1	0.683
Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
N	400	400
Communication		
Pearson correlation	0.683	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
N	400	400

**Table 5: Correlation analysis between poverty alleviation programmes and knowledge**

	Poverty alleviation programmes	Knowledge
Poverty alleviation programmes		
Pearson correlation	1	-0.143
Sig. (2-tailed)		0.400
N	400	400
Knowledge		
Pearson correlation	-0.143	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.400	
N	400	400

**Table 6: Model summary**

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Std. error of the estimate
1	0.963 <sup>a</sup>	0.927	0.927	0.238491

## 7. CONCLUSION

The study was to study failures in poverty alleviation programmes by giving special reference to Trincomalee district in Sri Lanka. The main objective is to determine the level of success in poverty alleviation programmes in Trincomalee district. On the other hand, the researcher is aiming to determine the relationship between the factors and failures of poverty alleviation programmes in Trincomalee district and to provide recommendation to make poverty alleviation programmes in a more successful manner.

The main objective is the level of success in poverty alleviation programs in Trincomalee district. The statistics of frequency analysis shows that the majority of the respondent opinion for the questionnaire is on the neutral to strongly agree while there are few respondents have given the answers to strongly disagree and disagree options. Therefore, the respondents show that level of success in the poverty alleviation is in satisfactory level. Obviously, the majority of the respondents have confirmed that each independent variable has an impact on effectiveness of poverty alleviation programmes. The second objective is relationship between the factors and the failure of poverty alleviation programmes in Trincomalee district. It shows that political factors have a very strong correlation while communication and involvement also have strong correlation. Moreover, knowledge has a negative correlation in this study.

## 8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Government need to create many reforms in the district and give the financial facilities to the village peoples for their farming.
- Government need to develop the infrastructures such as roads, water facilities, drainage in the village areas of trincomalee district. These developments will keep the people to stay in the areas and make the faming activities.
- Government must analyse the real situation in the rural areas and modify the poverty alleviation programmes related to the trincomalee district.
- In enhancing favourable attitudes towards the programme, it can give them the more responsibility by making them aware on how important they are in achieving the success of the implementation.
- In selecting officials to the programme to implement, educated, trained, and well-experienced officials should be given priority. Then, they will require minimal supervision, which, ultimately save money and reaches, targets on time.
- Government strictly give the orders to the politicians saying that they cannot interfere the officer's activities in poverty alleviation programmes in the district.
- The officers who are working in the poverty alleviation programme, should be fully involved in it and give the real data to government.
- Government need to aware the communities about the poverty alleviation programmes and the responsibilities they have to implementing a programme.

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