

Important Issues Need To Be Including In the Debate of Food Security



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Abstract

Green Revolution in India ensures self-sufficiency in food grains production and many schemes have been introduced by government tried to tackle the issue of accessibility, availability and affordability to ensure the food security in India. But many few have focused on the debate of nutritional value of that food which is available in market and consumed by peoples. Nutritional value of any food item not only depends on amount of calorie we consumed through food items but it also depends on many other factors also. In any region in India, there can we found a huge range of variation in its ecological specificity which has its own demand what to produce in that locality without doing any harm to their ecological system. This paper focus on a need to reject that quality and quantity of food consumption pattern which is market oriented and also focus on a need to revive indigenous systems of food consumption pattern and food production pattern also which is purely based on ecological specificity of any region. It definitely ensures maximum nutritional value of any food which is based on the production and consumption pattern of indigenous system in comparison to that based on western system of production and consumption in India. This paper is based on secondary sources of literature.

Keywords: Food Security, Nutrition, Commercialization Of Food Production Pattern & Food Consumption Pattern, Revival Of Indigenous System

Introduction

After independence in India, it was first requirement of stakeholders of this nation, to ensure the food security of every citizen of this country. But at that time, due to exploitation did by Britishers and many more other hurdles, we were not self sufficient in terms of food-grains production. Then Green Revolution turned into a specific history & ensured self sufficiency in food-grain production in India. The definition of food security is that, "*food security exists 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.*" (Lathi & Narkhede 2010; 02). It is true that India has got self sufficiency in food production but availability of food for every individual has not been achieved yet, especially the quality of food one intake is a serious matter in the issue of food security. Especially in some parts of India like Bundelkhand, Rajasthan, Jharkhand and many areas like this, people still deprived from basic required amount of food, so what to talk about quality food.

One can differentiate between transient food security and chronic food security (Radhakrishnana 1991.). Transitory food insecurity is associated with the risks related to either access or the availability of food during the off-season, drought and inflationary years and so forth, whereas, the problem of chronic food security is associated with poverty and arises due to continuously inadequate diet (ibid). The policy formulations also vary with both the situations of food security. Such regions in India as Bundelkhand, Jharkhand people still forced to face both types of food insecurities i.e. in some regions people forced to face transient food insecurity (e.g. due to crop-failure or flood/drought situation and many others reason) which has been converted into chronic food insecurity (e.g. due to landlessness or unsuccessful implementation of MNREGA) or a major probability of happening this. Due to frequent occurred drought or floods in some areas of these regions, marginalized section of population is forced to face serious issues of starvation. Due to this worse situation, they have to leave their home places and migrated towards cities in search of

employment to prevent their family members from starvation. As Amartya Sen (1982) define starvation as those people going without adequate food.

Transient food insecurity in India as said by many has been overcome by giving priority to self-sufficiency in foodgrains and with public distribution of foodgrains (Radhakrishna 1991) through various schemes like Antyodaya Anna yojana, PDS scheme etc. If it is true, why still such conditions exist of starvation among peoples in India? And it is again surprising, that this transient food insecurity converts into chronic food insecurity not only in these regions but in all over India also. In Jharkhand, recently 14 people died due to lack of Aadhaar cards with them (2018/9/12; financial express.com at 12:15 pm/4-5-2019). What it reflects if we have overcome food insecurity by giving priority to self sufficiency in food grains. What this case reflects? Is that now in contemporary situation there is not much need to focus on the self sufficiency of food-grains but necessary to focus on the distribution of food grains. Some people are deprived from these surplus food-grains or policy implications due to hurdles come in administrative rules and regulations. The rules and regulations formulated for the benefits of these marginalized section peoples are now converted into death rules for them.

Objectives of the Study

This paper is an attempt to focus on the issue of commercialization of food in India. This commercialization of food production and also food consumption behaviour in India is a major responsible factor which needs to be raised in debate of food-security in India. It affects not only nutritional aspect of food that is consumed by an individual not only in urban areas but in rural areas also. Further it focuses on a recent need to reject the western model of food production and food consumption & tried to identify the importance of revival of indigenous method of food production pattern and consumption pattern also.

Gaps Need To Be Identified In the Debate of Food Security

India has very heterogeneous topography, where from north to south and east to west a huge variation in temperature, climate & geography lies and cultural diversity is also a prominent feature of India. If we consider an overview of ancient history of it's every specific region then one can found that every region has its own peculiarities in terms of its social, economic, political dimensions but also in terms of food production and food consumption also. What to produce, when to produce, what to eat and when to eat they have their own specific indigenous cultures. E.g. in south 'rice' is prominent produce; in west Bengal 'fish and rice' is prominent produce; in Bundelkhand and Rajasthan which were affected by drought type of situations 'coarse grains' are prominent produce. These produced grains are major means of consumption also of these area's natives. One can say that every region according to its geographical peculiarities, climatic specificity and availability & accessibility of natural resources produced their crops and consumed also according to these specificities. If one going to analyze in history

that at that time what impact of people's food-culture/food habit on their health would be, answer will be no harmful impact exist for at that time. I do not want to say that at that time people had have no health related issues exist, but may be the reason behind health related problems would not be the consumption pattern as we can see in contemporary era that many health hazards occurred due to food habits of peoples now.

At that time an individual, take that kind of food which enabled him according to the climatic circumstances of that area. E.g. in north India, during summer there is a prevalent culture to eat curd because it provide coolness to the body and also protect body from 'lu' a kind of *pawan* flow in north India during summer. But if due to adaptation of western culture and modern pattern of life-style, if any person of Jammu Kashmir ate curd at the winter of December and January at any late night ceremony then definitely it will be harmful for their health. This is an example only to illustrate that to produce any crop/any food item, to consume any food product and to preserve and restore any food item for long time their exist a culture since long time in Indian tradition but due to adaptation of western culture and modern pattern of life style and various kind of food availability in market; indigenous pattern of not only food production but also food consumption have been forgotten by peoples. Many scholars have found in their study that due to increase in income, now consumption pattern has been changed in urban and also in rural areas (Ittyerah 2013). Documentation from various sources and revival of these indigenous patterns of food production and consumption in accordance with the climatic change and regional diversity is necessity of today's India. Because many health problems, many ecological imbalances are the creation of lack of knowledge of these indigenous cultural pattern of food production and consumption which is inherent in India's great history of its various local rich and prosperous regions.

One can search out the imbalance also between urban and rural food supply. A rural agricultural laborer who have done hard-work in other's land to grown varieties of crops and get paid in return as money/kind/both, forced to face insecurity because even after such hard work, he is still not able to give proper diet of everyday life to their family members and himself also. Why is it because he has not the purchasing power parity that he could buy the costlier food items which are nutritious for their lives? Leave it; he is not even able to organize proper staple food for a yearly need of his family members. On the other side, in urban areas, in super markets, in supermalls, in various stores, in various restaurants huge varieties of food-items has been supplied by market at various costs to the urban peoples; according to their needs or status or purchasing power parity. But the marginalized sections of rural areas or even within urban areas, some peoples have no access even to the basic staple food also. Who created this huge gap between peoples? no doubt market and commercialization of not only commodities of everyday life but of status and life

style also? That if we eat online food items it would be reputed among peers. As one can analyze, that this market has been started spreading in some rural parts of India also. What if it would be happened successfully? Obviously people started eating the commercialized food or packaged food which may be fruitful for their health may not be but as I opined it would be the major cause of many diseases among coming generations.

Due to expansion of market, industries, McDonalidization and many other modern trends, the indigenous system of various regions have been diluted now. One point need to be focused here that market for its own expansion which kind of produce or food items generate without consider the health aspect and regional specificity or needs of that region, one should reject that, and adapt only that produce or food habits which are in accordance with one's regional ecological specificity and also various diversified aspects of that region. Sustainability and revival of indigenous system has been closely linked with each other. Local/ regional governance of food production/consumption is a necessary need of this time. There is a need to revive the indigenous culture of food production and consumption.

Whenever the issue of food comes to discussion it has always an ethical side to discuss, apart from commercial view (Lathi & Narkhede 2010). Consideration of food security requires moving beyond food availability and careful intervention in the process of commercialization of food-items and also need a shift in land use pattern, avoidance of cultivating crops for market. Why trend of cultivating cash-crops has been increased among cultivators in India because they need more money to the next investment in crop-production for market only which itself costlier; such agricultural practices required more and costlier input. The point does not end here, Due to expansion of market and will to adapt high life style/easy life style or one can say that kind of life style which is prominent in market among peoples now have started turned the agricultural scenario not only in the west but in India also. This emerging scenario has been called as "age of agricultural ignorance" by Sterling Evans (2019). He emphasized that now population working in land urged their children to leave these occupations and shift their focus on education and less physically demanding occupation. If, it would be the case, in all over world then who will going to cultivate crops for others, not related with agriculture.

Conclusion

To ensure the food security it is necessary to revive the indigenous system of land use pattern in accordance with ecological specificity of local regions. Also, it is necessary to discourage the commercialization of food items in large scale industries which is responsible for much health hazardous in contemporary scenario. Getting self-sufficiency in food production is also not enough condition; but distribution of that production among population is another required and necessary condition. Policy makers have to focus their shift on that amount of produced food grains which is directly going in the hands of so called stakeholders of commercialization of foodie items which generate many problems in the cycle of food production and food consumption also not only to those who are capable to purchase any quality and quantity of food but also to those who are unable even to fulfill their basic need of food. Food security has three components, viz., availability, accessibility, and absorption (nutrition) (Sharma & Dev 2010; 01) but the processes of commercialization of food prevalent in contemporary India affect the nutritious value of food items which is available to the whole section of society directly indirectly.

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