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# Perspectives and Policy Implications for Global Poverty Alleviation

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**ABSTRACT:** A slew of participatory and community-demand-driven approaches have emerged in order to address the multi-dimensional nature of poverty in developing nations. The present study identifies critical factors responsible for poverty alleviation in India with the aid of fuzzy cognitive maps (FCMs) deployed for showcasing causal reasoning. It is through FCM-based simulations that the study evaluates the efficacy of existing poverty alleviation approaches, including community organisation based micro-financing, capability and social security, market-based and good governance. Our findings confirm, to some degree, the complementarity of various approaches to poverty alleviation that need to be implemented simultaneously for a comprehensive poverty alleviation drive. FCM-based simulations underscore the need for applying an integrated and multi-dimensional approach incorporating elements of various approaches for eradicating poverty, which happens to be a multi-dimensional phenomenon. Besides, the study offers policy implications for the design, management, and implementation of poverty eradication programmes. On the methodological front, the study enriches FCM literature in the areas of knowledge capture, sample adequacy, and robustness of the dynamic system models.

**KEYWORDS:** policy, global, poverty, alleviation, perspectives, implications, eradication, social –security, programmes

## I.INTRODUCTION

The World Bank's 2000 World Development Report defines poverty as an unacceptable deprivation in human well-being that can comprise both physiological and social deprivation. Physiological deprivation involves the non-fulfillment of basic material or biological needs, including inadequate nutrition, health, education, and shelter. A person can be considered poor if he or she is unable to secure the goods and services to meet these basic material needs. The concept of physiological deprivation is thus closely related to, but can extend beyond, low monetary income and consumption levels. Social deprivation widens the concept of deprivation to include risk, vulnerability, lack of autonomy, powerlessness, and lack of self-respect. Given that countries' definitions of deprivation often go beyond physiological deprivation and sometimes give greater weight to social deprivation, local populations (including poor communities) should be engaged in the dialogue that leads to the most appropriate definition of poverty in a country.<sup>1</sup>

To safeguard macroeconomic stability, the government budget, including the country's poverty reduction strategies, must be financed in a sustainable, noninflationary manner. The formulation and integration of a country's macroeconomic policy and poverty reduction strategy are iterative processes. Poverty reduction strategies need first to be articulated <sup>2</sup>(i.e., objectives and policies specified), then costed, and finally financed within the overall budget in a noninflationary manner. The amount of finance, much of which will be on concessional terms, is, however, not necessarily fixed during this process: if credible poverty reduction strategies cannot be financed from available resources, World Bank and IMF staff should and will actively assist countries in their efforts to raise additional financial support from the donor community. Nonetheless, in situations where financing gaps remain, a country would have to revisit the intermediate objectives of their strategy and reexamine their priorities. Except in cases where macroeconomic imbalances are severe, there will usually be some scope for flexibility in setting short-term macroeconomic targets. However, the objective of macroeconomic stability should not be compromised.<sup>3</sup>

Poverty alleviation has been highlighted as one of the essential aspects of global development. It has consistently ranked as the top priority among a list of sustainable development goals proposed by the United Nations.<sup>1</sup> The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has created an unprecedentedly challenging climate for the global economy, society, and populations worldwide, which has consequently intensified socioeconomic inequities among different population groups, especially for the poor and vulnerable.<sup>4</sup> In 2020, global extreme poverty rose for the first time over the past 20 years under the impact of COVID-19, which resulted in an additional 120 million people living in poverty (1.90 USD/day), with the total number of

impoverished residents expected to reach approximately 150 million by the end of 2021.<sup>2</sup> Such a changing climate has posed a huge obstacle to efforts to alleviate global poverty in terms of improving the affordability, accessibility, adaptability, and equity of medical services for impoverished populations. Under such circumstances, a sustainable strategy for health poverty alleviation needs to be urgently identified and adopted via global efforts to build a global community with shared future free from poverty.<sup>5</sup>

The link between poverty and health has been verified in previous studies.<sup>3-4</sup> Poverty has been shown to breed ill-health, which, in turn, keeps poor people poor. Multiple factors such as low household income, the high expense of drugs and medical procedures, and lack of health insurance coverage also pose significant obstacles for impoverished populations seeking timely access to medical services. Inability to access such services results in reduced productivity in the labor market due to poverty-induced ill-health, further exacerbating the poverty status in a vicious cycle.<sup>3</sup> Conversely, health can also be characterized as a form of wealth.<sup>6</sup> Health has been demonstrated to have considerable instrumental value in reducing poverty. This is because investments made in health promotion for target populations serve as a significant contributor to boosting residents' productivity at work and ultimately increase household income for residents struggling at the edge of the poverty line.<sup>5-6</sup> This is based on relationships of mutual affect that make health-related investments an important tool for alleviating poverty.<sup>7</sup> Specifically, both medical suppliers and consumers are engaged throughout the process of making investments aimed at health poverty alleviation.<sup>7</sup> Strategies adopted by the supply side typically involve the promotion of medical service capacity of healthcare organizations, drug supplements, and the establishment of health insurance schemes; while the demand side-related tactics mainly involve the improvement of health literacy at the individual level.<sup>8-9</sup> Throughout the process of implementing various poverty-alleviation-related projects and policies, remarkable achievements have been made in successfully realizing some project goals. For instance, as a remarkable milestone, during the period 2013–2020, China has successfully achieved a reduction of 98.99 million residents living in extremely poor conditions (1 USD/day), as part of which approximately 40 million people were lifted out of illness-induced poverty via the implementation of the Health Poverty Alleviation Project.<sup>10</sup> However, despite progress made in the aspect of poverty alleviation, lessons should also be learned from cases where previously proposed project goals were not achieved.<sup>8</sup> For example, the Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana health insurance scheme previously implemented across India failed to demonstrate its expected capacity to reduce the burden of out-of-pocket spending on poor households.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, effective strategies aimed at facilitating poverty alleviation worldwide need to be constantly explored, along with the evaluation of worldwide projects targeted at poverty alleviation from the perspective of cost-effectiveness.

To emphasize the goal of building a global community with shared future free from poverty by exploring several effective strategies aimed at worldwide poverty alleviation, we have included six articles in this special issue of Global Health Journal, "Global Health Aid for Poverty Alleviation". These have been contributed by a wide range of authors from different countries in Asia, Europe, Africa, and North America. These papers are expected to provide a glimpse of previously adopted effective approaches as part of global efforts to achieve health poverty alleviation goals.<sup>9</sup>

## II.DISCUSSION

Global sustainable development is the common target of human society. "No Poverty" and "Zero Hunger" are two primary goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs), along with important premises in the completion of the goals of "Decent Work and Economic Growth Industry" and "Innovation and Infrastructure." China has made great efforts in meeting its No Poverty targets. To achieve the goal of eliminating extreme poverty in the rural areas by the end of 2021, China has been carrying out a basic strategy of targeted approach named Jingzhunfupin2, which refers to implementing accurate poverty identification, accurate support, accurate management and tracking. By 2021, China accomplished its poverty alleviation target for the new era on schedule and achieved a significant victory.<sup>3</sup> However, the worldwide challenges are still arduous. On the one hand, the recent global poverty eradication process has been further hindered by the COVID-19 pandemic. The World Bank shows that global extreme poverty rose in 2020 for the first time in over 20 years, with the total expected to rise to about 150 million by the end of 2020. People "return to poverty" are emerging around the world. On the other hand, people who got out of income poverty may still be trapped in deprivations in health or education. About 1.3 billion people (22%) still live in multidimensional poverty among 107 developing countries, according to the Global





Multidimensional Poverty Index report released by the United Nations<sup>5</sup>. Meanwhile, the issue of inequality became more prominent, reflected by the number of people who are in relative poverty<sup>6</sup>. In line with the dynamic poverty realities, the focusing of poverty research moved forward as well. Research frameworks have evolved from single dimension poverty to multidimensional poverty and from income poverty to capacity poverty. Research perspectives concentrate on the macroscopic view, but have now turned to microscopic individual behavior analysis. Cross-integration of sociology, psychology, public management, and other disciplines also helps to expand and deepen the research. Some cutting-edge researchers are making effort to shed light on the relationships between “No Poverty” and other SDGs.<sup>9</sup> For example, many scientists verified the coherence of climate targets and achieving poverty eradication from a global perspective<sup>7</sup>. Researchers discussed the impacts and synergies of achieving different poverty eradication goals on air pollutants in China. These novel papers give us insightful inspiration on combining poverty reduction with the resource or environmental problem including aspects like energy inequity, carbon emission. Hence, summarizing the research on different poverty realities and academic backgrounds should provide theoretical and empirical guidance for speeding up the elimination of poverty in the world.<sup>10</sup>

Previous review literature on poverty reduction all directed certain sub-themes. For example, many scientists reviewed urban poverty, foreign aid, microfinance, and other topics, identifying the objects, causes, policies, and mechanisms of poverty and poverty reduction. Another feature of the review literature is that scholars often synthesize the articles and map the knowledge network manually, which constrains the amount of literature to be analyzed, leading to an inadequate understanding of poverty research. Manually literature review on specific fields of poverty reduction results in a research gap. Analysis delineating the general academic knowledge of poverty reduction is somewhat limited despite the abundance of research. Yet, following the trend toward scientific specialization and interdisciplinary viewpoints, the core and the periphery research fields and their connections have not been clearly described. Different studies are in a certain degree of segmentation because scholars have separately conducted studies based on their countries' unique poverty background or their subdivision direction. Possibly, lacking communication and interaction will affect the overall development of poverty reduction research especially in the context of globalization. Less than 10 years are left to accomplish the UN sustainable development goals by 2030. It is urgent to view the previous literature from a united perspective in this turbulent and uncertain age. Encouragingly, with advances in analytical technology, bibliometrics has become increasingly popular for developing representative summaries of the leading results. It has been widely applied in a variety of fields. In the domain of poverty study, researchers adopted the bibliometric method and reviewed thousands of papers on poverty and inequality in Latin America. Given above issues, we expand the scope of the literature and conduct a systematic bibliometric analysis to make a preliminary description of the research agenda on poverty reduction.<sup>11</sup>

This paper presents an analysis of publications, keywords, citations, and the networks of co-authors, co-words, and co-citations, displaying the research status of the field, the hot spots, and evolution through time. We use R language and VOSviewer software to process and visualize data. Our contributions may be as follows. Firstly, we used the bibliometric method and reviewed thousands of papers together, helping keep pace with research advances in poverty alleviation with the rapid growth in the literature. Secondly, we clarified the core and periphery research areas, and their connections<sup>12</sup>. These may be beneficial to handle the trend toward scientific specialization, as well as fostering communication and cooperation between disciplines, mitigating segmentation between the individual studies. Thirdly, we also provided insightful implications for future research directions. Discipline integration, intergenerational poverty, heterogeneous research are the directions that should be paid attention to.

### III.RESULTS

COVID-19 has smaller direct impacts on agricultural production than many other pandemics. The 1918 “Spanish Flu” pandemic, for example, caused substantial losses in farm output because of high morbidity and mortality among working-age males. Some other pandemics, such as Swine flu and Avian flu, have directly reduced agricultural production. By contrast, COVID-19 involves a relatively short period of sickness for most of its victims, has its highest mortality rates among older people, many of whom have left the formal workforce, and does not directly affect crops or livestock. However, it does have substantial impacts on agriculture and food security, generally through less direct channels of influence. Therefore, it is useful to begin the discussion by laying out the channels through which COVID-19 affects food markets and food security. We then turn to the modeling framework that we use to evaluate these impacts.<sup>13</sup>



The main channels of effect between the COVID-19 pandemic and food security are:

- a. income losses and demand shocks;
- b. food supply chain disruptions;
- c. consumer responses, such as hoarding, food waste, and dietary shifts;
- d. policy responses: hoarding at country level (food export bans) and fiscal stimulus.

Income losses play an important role in reducing food security during the COVID-19 pandemic. We know from the work of Indian scientists that food insecurity and even famines frequently are not associated with physical shortages of food. What matters more is people's ability to access food. Some of the current income declines are direct consequences of the disease, such as working time lost due to the disease; whereas others are policy responses designed to reduce the rate of disease transmission. It appears that the most important are individual responses as people try to avoid situations where they are likely to catch (or transmit) the disease. Because individuals consider primarily their own risk of infection, some degree of coordinated distancing is appropriate to reduce the externalities imposed on others and particularly the loss of life associated with the pandemic. These social distancing policies range from simple measures such as encouraging wearing of masks and frequent handwashing, through more intrusive policies such as restricting activities with high transmission risk, to strict lockdown requirements.<sup>14</sup>

The income losses resulting from these actions are primarily outside the food system as food-related activities have generally been designated "essential" activities exempt from being locked down, except for some restaurants and other food-away from home outlets.<sup>15</sup> Hence, most of the direct income losses are outside the agri-food system. Unskilled workers in nonessential activities are at greatest risk of falling into unemployment because they generally do not have the telecommuting options that have greatly reduced the impact of this pandemic on overall economic activity and employment.

Food supply chain disruptions caused by COVID-19 are also affecting food security. Staple food production in high-income countries has been relatively little affected, whereas labor-intensive activities in some markets and processing activities have been strongly affected by disease outbreaks. Another key point of breakdown has been in processing of some agricultural products—and particularly production of meat—where low temperatures and proximity of workers can result in very high rates of disease transmission. Other disruptions to food supply chains have come from restriction on the movement of workers, the dramatic reduction in international air travel, and slowdowns in the administrative approvals for food trade. At the consumer end, restaurant services have been particularly hard hit both by lockdown policies and by consumer risk aversion.<sup>16</sup>

Most consumer responses have been consequences of the COVID shocks, but some have injected additional volatility into the system. Uncertainty about the impact of the pandemic on availability of some foods has added volatility to food demand as consumers have sought to stockpile food items, such as meat and dairy products. Another early feature of adjustment to the pandemic was increased food loss as suppliers struggled to adjust their product mix in response to shifts in final sales away from food services to consumption at home. A third feature of adjustment appears to have been a run down in financial assets as affected households seek to reduce the impact of income losses on their access to food. In one carefully studied case, Abate, researchers found that only a small fraction of Ethiopian households appear to have enough savings to cover more than a month's food needs. The same study tracking households during the COVID-19 outbreak also finds that income losses and food price changes appear to have changed demand for food, with declines in consumption of nutrient-rich products like legumes, vegetables, and dairy.<sup>17</sup>

Policy responses to the pandemic also play a major role in the outcome. Although economies would likely have had substantial reductions in economic activity as people sought to avoid catching (and/or transmitting) the disease, lockdown policies appear to have increased the adverse short-run impact on output, while—where properly implemented—reducing the rate of transmission and potentially allowing a swifter recovery. In some cases, this has had a high payoff, by sharply



reducing the impact of the disease, while, in other cases, such as the United States, the opportunity to reduce the incidence of the disease to low levels in the first round was missed. Even when containment policies were initially successful, frequent resurgences of the disease suggest that the economic impacts are likely to last until effective treatments and/or vaccines are widely available.<sup>18</sup>

Fiscal and monetary stimulus appears to have had a substantial impact on output levels in many of the higher income countries, with initial fiscal stimulus of around 11% of GDP in the United States and substantial stimulus packages in many other high-income countries.<sup>2</sup> Although fiscal stimulus packages have been announced in many developing countries, these generally appear to be much smaller as a share of GDP than those in the higher income countries. Expansion of social protection programs has been an important element in the response with 212 countries, mostly in the developing world, introducing almost 1200 measures by September 2020.<sup>3</sup> About half of the social assistance measures were cash based, with most being short term in duration. In developing countries, the size and duration of such responses seems to be highly variable. As little is known so far about the precise allocation of those resources across households, we do not account for the social protection measures taken by developing countries in the scenario analysis presented below. Our focus is rather on assessing the direct impact of the crisis on poverty in the absence of such social protection measures.

Many countries implemented restrictions on food exports early in the crisis designed to avoid increases in domestic food prices. Fortunately, however, these restrictions did not set off an upward price spiral of the type seen in 2007–2008. Although 22 countries had announced or imposed food export restrictions<sup>19</sup>, affecting around 5% of calories embedded in traded food, early in the crisis, all but one had been eliminated by the end of September.<sup>4</sup>

### Implications

Amartya Kumar Sen (Bengali: born 3 November 1933) is an Indian economist and philosopher, who since 1972 has taught and worked in the India, the United Kingdom and the United States. Sen has made contributions to welfare economics, social choice theory, economic and social justice, economic theories of famines, decision theory, development economics, public health, and measures of well-being of countries.<sup>20</sup>

He is currently a Thomas W. Lamont University Professor, and Professor of Economics and Philosophy at Harvard University.<sup>[5]</sup> He formerly served as Master of Trinity College at the University of Cambridge.<sup>[6]</sup> He was awarded the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences<sup>[7]</sup> in 1998 and India's highest civilian honour the Bharat Ratna the following year for his contribution to welfare economics. The German Publishers and Booksellers Association awarded him the 2020 Peace Prize of the German Book Trade for his pioneering scholarship addressing issues of global justice and combating social inequality in education and healthcare. Amartya Sen was born in a Bengali Hindu Baidya<sup>[8][9][10]</sup> family in Santiniketan, Bengal, British India. The famed polymath and writer, Rabindranath Tagore, gave Amartya Sen his name (Bengali: অমর্ত্য, romanized: ômorto, lit. 'immortal or heavenly').<sup>[11]</sup> Sen's family was from Wari and Manikganj, Dhaka, both in present-day Bangladesh. His father Ashutosh Sen was Professor of Chemistry at Dhaka University, Development Commissioner in Delhi and then Chairman of the West Bengal Public Service Commission. He moved with his family to West Bengal in 1945. Sen's mother Amita Sen was the daughter of Kshiti Mohan Sen, the eminent Sanskritist and scholar of ancient and medieval India, who was a close associate of Rabindranath Tagore. K.M. Sen served as the second Vice Chancellor of Visva Bharati University from 1953 to 1954.<sup>21</sup>

Sen began his school education at St Gregory's School in Dhaka in 1940. In the fall of 1941, Sen was admitted to Patha Bhavana, Shantiniketan, where he completed his school education. The school had many progressive features, such as distaste for examinations or competitive testing. In addition, the school stressed cultural diversity, and embraced cultural influences from the rest of the world.<sup>[12]</sup> In 1951, he went to Presidency College, Calcutta, where he earned a B.A. in economics with First in the First Class, with a minor in Mathematics, as a graduating student of the University of Calcutta. While at Presidency, Sen was diagnosed with oral cancer, and given a 15% chance of living five years.<sup>[13]</sup> With radiation treatment, he survived, and in 1953 he moved to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he earned a second B.A. in economics in 1955 with a First Class, topping the list as well.<sup>22</sup> At this time, he was elected President of the Cambridge Majlis.<sup>[14]</sup> While Sen was officially a PhD student at Cambridge (though he had finished his research in 1955–56), he was offered the position of First-Professor and First-Head of the Economics Department of the newly created Jadavpur University in Calcutta. He is

still the youngest chairman to have headed the Department of Economics. He served in that position, starting the new Economics Department, from 1956 to 1958.<sup>23</sup>

Meanwhile, Sen was elected to a Prize Fellowship at Trinity College, which gave him four years of freedom to do anything he liked; he made the radical decision to study philosophy. Sen explained: "The broadening of my studies into philosophy was important for me not just because some of my main areas of interest in economics relate quite closely to philosophical disciplines (for example, social choice theory makes intense use of mathematical logic and also draws on moral philosophy, and so does the study of inequality and deprivation), but also because I found philosophical studies very rewarding on their own."<sup>[15]</sup> His interest in philosophy, however, dates back to his college days at Presidency, where he read books on philosophy and debated philosophical themes.<sup>24</sup> One of the books he was most interested in was Kenneth Arrow's Social Choice and Individual Values.<sup>[16]</sup>

In Cambridge, there were major debates between supporters of Keynesian economics, and the neo-classical economists who were skeptical of Keynes. Because of a lack of enthusiasm for social choice theory in both Trinity and Cambridge, Sen chose a different subject for his PhD thesis, which was on "The Choice of Techniques" in 1959. The work had been completed earlier, except for advice from his adjunct supervisor in India, Professor A.K. Dasgupta, given to Sen while teaching and revising his work at Jadavpur, under the supervision of the "brilliant but vigorously intolerant" post-Keynesian, Joan Robinson.<sup>[17]</sup> Quentin Skinner notes that Sen was a member of the secret society Cambridge Apostles during his time at Cambridge.<sup>[18]</sup>

During 1960–61, Amartya Sen visited the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, on leave from Trinity College.

Sen's work on 'Choice of Techniques' complemented that of Maurice Dobb. In a developing country, the Dobb-Sen strategy relied on maximising investible surpluses, maintaining constant real wages and using the entire increase in labour productivity, due to technological change, to raise the rate of accumulation. In other words, workers were expected to demand no improvement in their standard of living despite having become more productive. Sen's papers in the late 1960s and early 1970s helped develop the theory of social choice, which first came to prominence in the work by the American economist Kenneth Arrow. Arrow had most famously shown that when voters have three or more distinct alternatives (options), any ranked order voting system will in at least some situations inevitably conflict with what many assume to be basic democratic norms. Sen's contribution to the literature was to show under what conditions Arrow's impossibility theorem<sup>[19]</sup> applied, as well as to extend and enrich the theory of social choice, informed by his interests in history of economic thought and philosophy.<sup>25</sup>

In 1981, Sen published *Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation* (1981), a book in which he argued that famine occurs not only from a lack of food, but from inequalities built into mechanisms for distributing food. Sen also argued that the Bengal famine was caused by an urban economic boom that raised food prices, thereby causing millions of rural workers to starve to death when their wages did not keep up.<sup>[20]</sup>

Sen's interest in famine stemmed from personal experience. As a nine-year-old he witnessed the Bengal famine of 1943, in which three million people died. This staggering loss of life was unnecessary, Sen later concluded. He presents data that there was an adequate food supply in Bengal at the time, but particular groups of people including rural landless labourers and urban service providers like barbers did not have the means to buy food as its price rose rapidly due to factors that include acquisitions by the military, panic buying,<sup>26</sup> hoarding, and price gouging, all of them connected to the war in the region. In *Poverty and Famines*, Sen revealed that in many cases of famine, food supplies were not significantly reduced. In Bengal, for example, food production, while down on the previous year, was higher than in previous non-famine years. Sen points to a number of social and economic factors, such as declining wages, unemployment, rising food prices, and poor food-distribution, which led to starvation. His capabilities approach focuses on positive freedom, a person's actual ability to be or do something, rather than on negative freedom approaches, which are common in economics and simply focuses on non-interference. In the Bengal famine, rural laborers' negative freedom to buy food was not affected. However, they still starved because they were not positively free to do anything, they did not have the functioning of nourishment, nor the capability to escape morbidity.

In addition to his important work on the causes of famines, Sen's work in the field of development economics has had considerable influence in the formulation of the "Human Development Report",<sup>[21]</sup> published by the United Nations Development Programme.<sup>[22]</sup> This annual publication that ranks countries on a variety of economic and social indicators owes





much to the contributions by Sen among other social choice theorists in the area of economic measurement of poverty and inequality.

Sen's revolutionary contribution to development economics and social indicators is the concept of "capability" developed in his article Equality of What.<sup>[23]</sup> He argues that governments should be measured against the concrete capabilities of their citizens. This is because top-down development will always trump human rights as long as the definition of terms remains in doubt (is a "right" something that must be provided or something that simply cannot be taken away?). For instance, in the United States citizens have a right to vote.<sup>27</sup> To Sen, this concept is fairly empty. In order for citizens to have a capacity to vote, they first must have "functionings". These "functionings" can range from the very broad, such as the availability of education, to the very specific, such as transportation to the polls. Only when such barriers are removed can the citizen truly be said to act out of personal choice. It is up to the individual society to make the list of minimum capabilities guaranteed by that society. For an example of the "capabilities approach" in practice, see Martha Nussbaum's Women and Human Development.<sup>[24]</sup>

He wrote a controversial article in The New York Review of Books entitled "More Than 100 Million Women Are Missing" (see Missing women of Asia), analyzing the mortality impact of unequal rights between the genders in the developing world, particularly Asia. Other studies, including one by Emily Oster, had argued that this is an overestimation, though Oster has since then recanted her conclusions.<sup>[25]</sup>

In 1999, Sen further advanced and redefined the capability approach in his book Development as Freedom.<sup>[26]</sup> Sen argues that development should be viewed as an effort to advance the real freedoms that individuals enjoy, rather than simply focusing on metrics such as GDP or income-per-capita. Sen was inspired by violent acts he had witnessed as a child leading up to the Partition of India in 1947. On one morning, a Muslim daily<sup>28</sup> labourer named Kader Mia stumbled through the rear gate of Sen's family home, bleeding from a knife wound in his back. Because of his extreme poverty, he had come to Sen's primarily Hindu neighbourhood searching for work; his choices were the starvation of his family or the risk of death in coming to the neighbourhood. The price of Kader Mia's economic unfreedom was his death. Kader Mia need not have come to a hostile area in search of income in those troubled times if his family could have managed without it. This experience led Sen to begin thinking about economic unfreedom from a young age.<sup>29</sup>

In Development as Freedom, Sen outlines five specific types of freedoms: political freedoms, economic facilities, social opportunities, transparency guarantees, and protective security. Political freedoms refer to the ability of the people to have a voice in government and to be able to scrutinize the authorities. Economic facilities concern both the resources within the market and the market mechanism itself. Any focus on income and wealth in the country would serve to increase the economic facilities for the people.<sup>30</sup> Social opportunities deal with the establishments that provide benefits like healthcare or education for the populace, allowing individuals to live better lives. Transparency guarantees allow individuals to interact with some degree of trust and knowledge of the interaction. Protective security is the system of social safety nets that prevent a group affected by poverty being subjected to terrible misery. Before Sen's work, these had been viewed as only the ends of development; luxuries afforded to countries that focus on increasing income. However, Sen argues that the increase in real freedoms should be both the ends and the means of development. He elaborates upon this by illustrating the closely interconnected natures of the five main freedoms as he believes that expansion of one of those freedoms can lead to expansion in another one as well. In this regard he discusses the correlation between social opportunities of education and health and how both of these complement economic and political freedoms as a healthy and well-educated person is better suited to make informed economic decisions and be involved in fruitful political demonstrations etc. A comparison is also drawn between China and India to illustrate this interdependence of freedoms. Both countries were working towards developing their economies, China since 1979 and India since 1991.<sup>31</sup>

Welfare economics seeks to evaluate economic policies in terms of their effects on the well-being of the community. Sen, who devoted his career to such issues, was called the "conscience of his profession". His influential monograph Collective Choice and Social Welfare (1970), which addressed problems related to individual rights (including formulation of the liberal paradox), justice and equity, majority rule, and the availability of information about individual conditions, inspired researchers to turn their attention to issues of basic welfare. Sen devised methods of measuring poverty that yielded useful information for improving economic conditions for the poor. For instance, his theoretical work on inequality provided an explanation for why there are fewer women than men in India<sup>[27]</sup> and in China despite the fact that in the West and in poor but medically unbiased countries, women have lower mortality rates at all ages, live longer, and make a slight majority of the



population. Sen claimed that this skewed ratio results from the better health treatment and childhood opportunities afforded boys in those countries, as well as sex-selective abortions.<sup>32</sup>

Governments and international organisations handling food crises were influenced by Sen's work. His views encouraged policy makers to pay attention not only to alleviating immediate suffering but also to finding ways to replace the lost income of the poor—for example through public works—and to maintain stable prices for food. A vigorous defender of political freedom, Sen believed that famines do not occur in functioning democracies because their leaders must be more responsive to the demands of the citizens. In order for economic growth to be achieved, he argued, social reforms—such as improvements in education and public health—must precede economic reform.<sup>[28]</sup>

In 2009, Sen published a book called *The Idea of Justice*.<sup>[1]</sup> Based on his previous work in welfare economics and social choice theory, but also on his philosophical thoughts, Sen presented his own theory of justice that he meant to be an alternative to the influential modern theories of justice of John Rawls or John Harsanyi. In opposition to Rawls but also earlier justice theoreticians Immanuel Kant, Jean-Jacques Rousseau or David Hume, and inspired by the philosophical works of Adam Smith and Mary Wollstonecraft, Sen developed a theory that is both comparative and realisations-oriented (instead of being transcendental and institutional). However, he still regards institutions and processes as being equally important. As an alternative to Rawls's veil of ignorance, Sen chose the thought experiment of an impartial spectator as the basis of his theory of justice. He also stressed the importance of public discussion (understanding democracy in the sense of John Stuart Mill) and a focus on people's capabilities (an approach that he had co-developed), including the notion of universal human rights, in evaluating various states with regard to justice.

He has served as president of the Econometric Society (1984), the International Economic Association (1986–1989), the Indian Economic Association (1989) and the American Economic Association (1994). He has also served as president of the Development Studies Association and the Human Development and Capability Association. He serves as the honorary director of the Academic Advisory Committee of the Center for Human and Economic Development Studies at Peking University in China.

Sen has been called "the Conscience of the profession" and "the Mother Teresa of Economics" for his work on famine, human development theory, welfare economics, the underlying mechanisms of poverty, gender inequality, and political liberalism. However, he denies the comparison to Mother Teresa, saying that he has never tried to follow a lifestyle of dedicated self-sacrifice. Amartya Sen also added his voice to the campaign against the anti-gay Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code.<sup>33</sup>

Sen has served as Honorary Chairman of Oxfam, the UK based international development charity, and is now its Honorary Advisor.

Sen is also a member of the Berggruen Institute's 21st Century Council.

Sen is an Honorary Fellow of St Edmund's College, Cambridge.

He is also one of the 25 leading figures on the Information and Democracy Commission launched by Reporters Without Borders.

#### **IV.CONCLUSIONS**

Development is often taken to mean rising incomes. Discussions of the "goals of development" now often emphasize the reduction of poverty, rather than raising average incomes per se. The role of social services—particularly basic health and education—has also received greater emphasis in the 1980s, viewed mainly as instruments for raising the incomes of the poor. But, in all these approaches, income growth of one sort or another is what development is all about. A rather different view of the meaning of development has recently found expression in the 1990 Human Development Report (HRD) produced by the United Nations Development Programme. A conceptual underpinning for this approach can be found in the work of Amartya Sen. The essence of this view is that human development—what people can actually do and be—is the overriding purpose of economic development. Underdevelopment is viewed as the lack of certain basic capabilities, rather than lack of income per se. We do not aim here to advocate one of these approaches over the other, but rather to explore their implications for development policy. For instance, what does the human development approach imply about the role of economic growth and, in particular, about reducing income poverty. Should development priorities shift toward the provision of public services in poor countries, even if such a shift is at the expense of income growth.<sup>34</sup>



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