

ABSTRACT

The poor have traditionally taken the brunt of the blame for causing society's many problems. The most recent accusation directed against them is that they cause environmental degradation. The general consensus seems to be that poverty is a major cause of environmental degradation. In such a scenario it is essential to understand how far poverty influences the environmental degradation. It is necessary to design a study framework to understand this problem. The basic objective of this study is to see how the poverty-environment indicators in case of India reflect the role played by the impact of natural resources used as a determinant of poverty. We have devised a poverty-natural resource indicators table to fulfill our objective based on the methodology proposed by Shyam Sundar (2002). In order to account for the various indicators as proposed in our framework we look forward for the data available from 1990-2000. In order to show the interaction between poverty and environment we focus on the indicators like cereal production, agricultural land area, fishing yield, head count ratio, IMR, underweight children, under 5 stunted, no of deaths. The major conclusions of our study show that environmental degradation has tremendous human costs, and hits the poor most and directly too. , focus on bottom-up approaches to natural resource management; sensitization of decision-makers to local community's perceptions through participatory approaches should be encouraged. We have to be particularly cautious about destructive development which reduces total welfare, doing more harm than good. One can no longer have an environmental prevention through continuation of poverty and depriving these countries of development opportunities.