



Discerning Major Strategies for Alleviating Poverty in Developing Countries

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Abstract

Poverty in developing countries is a complex issue driven by an intricate interplay of economic, social, environmental, and political factors. This study aims to discern major strategies for alleviating poverty in developing countries. To achieve this objective, it adopted an exploratory research design based on secondary qualitative data collected from peer-reviewed journal articles, scholarly books, and policy reports published between 2015 and 2025. The secondary data, which were mustered through a comprehensive review of theoretical literature, underwent a thematic analysis. The findings of the analysis revealed economic growth and job creation, education and market-relevant skill development, financial inclusion and access to micro-finance services, social protection through social inclusion and safety nets, agriculture through innovation and agri-technology, good governance and transparent resource distribution, information and communication technology (ICT), renewable energy solutions, women's empowerment and gender equality, access to healthcare and nutrition services, infrastructure development, and inclusive and sustainable development practices as the key strategies for alleviating poverty in developing countries. These findings suggest that poverty is a complex issue requiring interconnected solutions rather than isolated interventions. This study benefits policymakers, development practitioners, and researchers by providing a synthesized strategic framework that supports planning, policy formulation, and the effective implementation of poverty reduction programs in developing countries.

Keywords: developing countries, poverty



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1. Introduction

Poverty is one of the most persistent and multidimensional challenges in developing countries (Thorbecke, 2015; Thorbecke, 2015). It is manifested in inadequate income, limited access to education and healthcare, unemployment, and social exclusion (Boardman et al., 2022; Halkos & Aslanidis, 2023). In spite of numerous national and international efforts, it continues to undermine human well-being and sustainable development. It indicates the necessity for a clearer understanding of the most effective strategies. In this context, this article discerns the key economic, social, institutional, and technological approaches that contribute to poverty reduction and inclusive growth.

1.1 Significance of the Study

This study fills existing knowledge gaps by synthesizing major poverty alleviation strategies and clarifying their relative importance in the context of developing countries.

1.2 Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is to discern the major strategies for alleviating poverty in developing countries by systematically analyzing key approaches that promote sustainable and inclusive development.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

In the present context, poverty persists as a complex and multidimensional challenge in developing countries. It has affected income security, access to basic services, and overall quality of life (Kuznetsova et al., 2021; Makole et al., 2022). Despite the implementation of various poverty reduction programs, many people continue to experience economic vulnerability, social exclusion, and limited development opportunities (Dugarova, 2015; Egharevba, 2016).

Ideally, poverty alleviation strategies should ensure inclusive economic growth, equitable resource distribution, and universal access to education, healthcare, and decent employment. Governments and development stakeholders should implement coherent, evidence-based, and sustainable approaches that effectively address the root causes of poverty (Giawah et al., 2021; Motadi, 2025). However, several challenges hinder the achievement of this ideal situation, including weak governance, inadequate policy coordination, limited financial resources, and insufficient institutional capacity. Moreover, disparities in education, technology access, and infrastructure continue to constrain the effectiveness of poverty alleviation initiatives (Galperin & Fernanda- Viecens, 2017; Chari, 2024).

Avoiding these obstacles is essential because persistent poverty undermines social cohesion, economic stability, and sustainable development (Sommer, 2019; Remeikienė, & Gasparienė, 2023). Failure to address these challenges perpetuates inequality and limits the long-term impact of development interventions. Methodologically, this study adopted a qualitative exploratory research design and relied on secondary sources of data such as journal articles, policy reports, and international development publications. The collected data were systematically reviewed and analyzed thematically to identify and categorize major poverty alleviation strategies.

In the future, the findings of this study will contribute to academic knowledge by offering a synthesized framework of effective poverty reduction strategies. They will also inform policymakers, development practitioners, and researchers in designing, implementing, and refining more effective and context-responsive poverty alleviation policies and programs.

1.4 Research Questions

This study primarily attempts to provide the answer of this research question:

1. What are the major strategies currently employed to alleviate poverty in developing countries?

1.5 Delimitations of the Study

This study was delimited to an exploratory research design to gain an in-depth understanding of major strategies for alleviating poverty in developing countries rather than to test hypotheses or establish causal relationships. The scope of data collection was confined to a comprehensive review of relevant theoretical literature, including books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and policy documents, while excluding primary data sources such as surveys or interviews. Furthermore, the analysis of data was limited to thematic analysis which focused on identifying, organizing, and interpreting recurring themes related to poverty alleviation strategies instead of employing quantitative or mixed-method analytical techniques.

The present study retains academic importance because it provides a systematic understanding of effective poverty reduction measures, contributing to the theoretical knowledge in development studies. Practically, it guides policymakers, development practitioners, and stakeholders in designing and implementing targeted interventions to improve living standards and promote sustainable socio-economic development.

1.6 Literature Review

Although various strategies have been proposed and implemented to alleviate poverty, ranging from economic growth initiatives and job creation to social protection programs and financial inclusion, it remains a persistent and multidimensional challenge in developing countries. Understanding these strategies is crucial for identifying effective approaches that can sustainably improve the living conditions of susceptible populations. The purpose of this literature review is to discern major strategies for alleviating poverty in developing countries.

1.6.1 Poverty

Poverty is a condition in which individuals or communities lack adequate financial, social, and material resources to meet basic human needs and maintain a dignified standard of living (Gweshengwe & Hassan, 2020; Someshwara, 2025). It is a complex and multidimensional socioeconomic condition in which individuals, households, or communities experience severe deprivation of income, resources, and opportunities, resulting in the inability to meet basic human needs and achieve a minimum standard of living. It encompasses not only material shortages such as inadequate food, shelter, clothing, healthcare, clean water, and sanitation, but also limited access to education, information, and productive resources necessary for sustainable livelihoods and meaningful participation in society. Thus, poverty goes beyond income deficiency to include social exclusion and restricted capabilities, undermining human dignity and overall quality of life (Jumayev, 2024; Drigo, 2025).

Poverty in developing countries is pervasive and multifaceted (Adams, 2024; Ghosh & Mondal, 2024). It is a sturdy challenge which has affected millions globally and hindered sustainable human development. Characterized by a lack of access to basic necessities such as food, clean water, healthcare, education, and adequate housing, its roots are often deeply embedded in historical factors, political instability, conflict, corruption, and insufficient economic infrastructure (Dos- Santos, 2017; Gweshengwe & Hassan, 2020). Environmental degradation and vulnerability to climate change impacts disproportionately affect impoverished communities, exacerbating resource scarcity and displacing populations. Moreover, weak governance, limited market access, and a lack of social safety nets perpetuate cycles of deprivation, making it difficult for individuals and families to escape extreme poverty, underscoring the urgent need for integrated and sustained global and local interventions (De Schutter et al., 2023; Jordan, 2025).

1.6.2 Developing Countries

Developing countries are generally understood as nations with relatively low levels of income, industrialization, and human development compared to developed economies (Sherwani et al., 2017; Paprotny, 2021). They often experience structural challenges such as limited access to quality education and healthcare, insufficient infrastructure, and widespread poverty and inequality. Economically, these countries tend to rely heavily on agriculture or other primary sectors, have lower Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or Gross National Income (GNI) per capita, and are in transitional stages of growth with emerging industrial and service sectors (Diao et al., 2019; Trentinaglia et al., 2023).

From an analytical perspective, developing countries are commonly identified through economic and human development indicators rather than a single universal definition. International organizations such as the World Bank classify them by income levels, while the United Nations emphasizes the Human Development Index (HDI), which incorporates health, education, and living standards (Kraay, 2019; Lind, 2019). Although the term is sometimes used interchangeably with labels like low- and middle-income countries or emerging economies, these classifications mainly capture economic dimensions and may not fully reflect broader social and developmental conditions.

There are several developing countries. Some major developing countries are Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, etc. in Asia, Nigeria, Kenya, Zambia, etc. in Africa, Egypt, Syria, Iran, etc. in Middle East, Haiti, Jamaica, etc. in North America, Kosovo, Georgia, Belarus, etc. in Europe (World Organization of Family Doctors, 2025).

1.6.3 Major Strategies for Alleviating Poverty in Developing Countries

Inclusive economic growth (Škare & Družeta, 2016; Turrey & Maqbool, 2018) and job creation (Rodrik, 2018; Leal-Filho et al., 2019) are consistently identified in the literature as foundational mechanisms for poverty reduction, as they expand employment opportunities, stimulate labor absorption, and increase household incomes, particularly when growth is supported by policies that strengthen productive and labor-intensive sectors. Such growth-oriented strategies become more effective when complemented by investments in education and market-relevant skill development, which enhance individuals' employability, productivity, and adaptability to changing labor market demands, thereby enabling access to decent employment and sustainable livelihoods (Goyal et al., 2018; Eryong & Xiuping, 2018; Singh & Chudasama, 2020; Wang, 2023). Alongside human capital development, expanding financial inclusion and access to microfinance plays a critical role in empowering marginalized populations, especially women, by facilitating entrepreneurship, supporting income-generating activities, and reducing vulnerability to economic shocks (Singh & Chudasama, 2020; Tran & Le, 2021; Lal, 2021; Umeaduma, 2023; Mbodj & Laye, 2025).

Social protection mechanisms and safety nets further complement these long-term strategies by providing immediate and targeted support to vulnerable households during periods of economic instability, health crises, or environmental shocks, thereby stabilizing incomes and enhancing household resilience (Ulrichs & Slater, 2016; Bowen et al., 2020). In predominantly agrarian developing economies, agricultural transformation through innovation and agri-technology remains particularly significant, as it improves rural productivity, strengthens food security, raises farm incomes, and directly addresses poverty in regions where it is most concentrated (Huang, 2018; Barbier, 2020; Khan et al., 2020; Kim et al., 2020; Abdulrahman et al., 2025). The effectiveness of these sectoral interventions is closely linked to good governance and transparent resource distribution, which ensure accountability, reduce corruption, and enhance the efficient delivery of poverty alleviation programs and public services (Singh & Chudasama, 2020; Coccia, 2021; Nguyen et al., 2021).

Moreover, leveraging information and communication technology (ICT) has emerged as a transformative tool for poverty reduction by expanding access to information, markets, education, and financial services, thereby improving livelihoods and narrowing rural–urban disparities (Onoja & Ajala, 2022; Anil & Disparities, 2024). Similarly, renewable energy solutions contribute to rural development by improving energy access, supporting local economic activities, and promoting environmental sustainability, which is essential for long-term poverty alleviation (Clausen & Rudolph, 2020; Moore, 2024). Women’s empowerment, alongside improved access to healthcare and nutrition services (Singh & Chudasama, 2020; Fasogbon et al., 2021), and sustained infrastructure investment (Folarin & Adeniyi, 2020; Mhlanga, 2021; Fagbemi et al., 2022) further strengthens human capital, enhances economic participation, and improves market connectivity, collectively fostering inclusive and sustainable development and durable poverty reduction outcomes (Singh & Chudasama, 2020; Wei et al., 2021; Tang, 2022; Abdulkareem et al., 2023; Ogbari et al., 2024).

Overall, the literature on poverty alleviation in developing countries underscores the interconnected and multidimensional nature of poverty reduction strategies (Hassan et al., 2023; Elisabeth, 2024). The key findings consistently emphasize the importance of economic growth and job creation, education and market-relevant skill development, financial inclusion and access to micro-finance services, social protection through social inclusion and safety nets, and agricultural innovation through agri-technology. In addition, good governance and transparent resource distribution, the strategic use of ICT, renewable energy solutions, women’s empowerment and gender equality, access to healthcare and nutrition services, infrastructure development, and inclusive and sustainable development practices emerge as essential components for effective poverty reduction. Collectively, these strategies demonstrate that poverty alleviation requires integrated, multi-sectoral approaches that simultaneously address structural constraints and immediate needs to achieve sustained and equitable development outcomes (Singh & Chudasama, 2020; Tong, 2025).

2. Materials and Methods

An exploratory research design was adopted to discern the major strategies for alleviating poverty in developing countries. This design was appropriate because it allowed the study to investigate complex, multidimensional strategies and synthesize insights from diverse sources (Kalu & Bwalya, 2017; Olawale et al., 2023). Secondary data were collected from peer-reviewed journal articles and books. The selected sources were published between 2015 and 2025. A comprehensive review of theoretical literature on poverty alleviation strategies in developing countries was conducted to gather relevant information.

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The analysis involved identifying, categorizing, and interpreting recurring themes and patterns across the literature to discern the most effective strategies for poverty alleviation.

Ethical considerations were observed by ensuring proper citation and acknowledgment of all sources used in the study. Moreover, the study avoided any form of plagiarism and maintained academic integrity throughout the data collection and analysis process.

2.1 Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis of the literature reveals several key strategies that are critical for alleviating poverty in developing countries.

Endorsing Inclusive Economic Growth and Job Creation: Inclusive economic growth focuses on expanding productive economic activities that create decent and sustainable employment opportunities for all segments of society. By generating jobs across sectors such as industry, services, and small enterprises, household income increases and income inequality

is reduced. This approach ensures that economic progress benefits the poor and marginalized, thereby contributing directly to poverty reduction (Škare & Družeta, 2016; Turrey & Maqbool, 2018; Rodrik, 2018; Leal-Filho et al., 2019).

Strengthening Education and Market-Relevant Skill Development: Access to quality education and market-oriented skill development programs plays a vital role in improving employability and productivity. Vocational training, technical education, and lifelong learning opportunities equip individuals with skills that match labor market demands. As a result, people gain better job prospects, higher earnings, and improved economic security over time (Goyal et al., 2018; Eryong & Xiuping, 2018; Singh & Chudasama, 2020; Wang, 2023).

Expanding Financial Inclusion and Access to Micro-Finance Services: Financial inclusion ensures that marginalized and low-income populations have access to affordable financial services such as credit, savings, insurance, and digital banking. Micro-finance services support small businesses and self-employment by providing capital to those excluded from formal banking systems. This access enables households to manage risks, invest in income-generating activities, and improve their overall financial stability (Singh & Chudasama, 2020; Tran & Le, 2021; Lal, 2021; Umeaduma, 2023; Mbodj & Laye, 2025).

Enhancing Social Protection through Social Inclusion and Safety Nets: Social protection systems provide targeted support to vulnerable populations through welfare programs, cash transfers, and social insurance schemes. These safety nets help individuals and families cope with economic shocks, unemployment, illness, or natural disasters. By reducing vulnerability and preventing sudden income loss, social protection plays a critical role in breaking the cycle of poverty (Hallegatte, 2016; Ulrichs & Slater, 2016; Bowen et al., 2020; Williams, 2020; Siddiqui et al., 2020; Gabor, 2021; Ferdous & Ullah, 2023).

Transforming Agriculture through Innovation and Agri-Technology: Agricultural transformation through innovation and technology improves productivity, food security, and rural livelihoods. The adoption of modern farming techniques, improved seeds, irrigation systems, and digital agricultural tools enhances efficiency and resilience. This transformation increases farmers' incomes, reduces rural poverty, and supports sustainable agricultural development (Huang, 2018; Barbier, 2020; Khan et al., 2020; Kim et al., 2020; Abdulrahman et al., 2025).

Ensuring Good Governance and Transparent Resource Distribution: Good governance promotes accountability, efficiency, and transparency in the management of public resources and development aid. Transparent systems, including digital platforms and blockchain technologies, help reduce corruption and ensure that resources reach intended beneficiaries. Effective governance strengthens public trust and improves the impact of poverty alleviation programs (Singh & Chudasama, 2020; Coccia, 2021; Nguyen et al., 2021).

Leveraging Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for Development: ICT plays a crucial role in development by improving access to information, markets, education, and financial services. Digital tools enable people to connect with economic opportunities, access online learning, and receive government services more efficiently. ICT also enhances innovation and inclusion, especially in remote and underserved areas (Onoja & Ajala, 2022; Anil & Disparities, 2024).

Promoting Renewable Energy Solutions for Rural Development: Renewable energy solutions such as biogas, solar, and wind power provide clean, affordable, and reliable energy in rural areas. Access to renewable energy supports local livelihoods, small businesses, and agricultural activities while reducing dependence on traditional fuels. This approach helps reduce energy poverty and promotes environmentally sustainable development (Clausen & Rudolph, 2020; Moore, 2024).

Advancing Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality: Women's empowerment strengthens economic growth by increasing women's participation in education, employment, entrepreneurship, and leadership. Inclusive policies and social enterprises promote equal access to resources, decision-making, and economic opportunities. Gender equality not only improves women's well-being but also enhances household income and overall societal development (Wei et al., 2021; Tang, 2022; Ogbari et al., 2024).

Improving Access to Healthcare and Nutrition Services: Strong healthcare systems and effective nutrition programs reduce disease burden and prevent poverty-related health shocks. Improved access to healthcare ensures early treatment, better maternal and child health, and increased productivity. Adequate nutrition supports physical and cognitive development, enabling individuals to participate fully in economic activities (Singh & Chudasama, 2020; Fasogbon et al., 2021).

Investing in Infrastructure Development: Investment in infrastructure such as transportation, energy, water supply, sanitation, and digital connectivity stimulates economic growth and improves living standards. Reliable infrastructure reduces production costs, increases market access, and supports service delivery. It also creates employment opportunities and enhances regional development (Folarin & Adeniyi, 2020; Mhlanga, 2021; Fagbemi et al., 2022).

Fostering Inclusive and Sustainable Development Practices: Inclusive and sustainable development integrates economic growth with social equity and environmental protection. By balancing development goals with long-term sustainability, this approach ensures that resources are preserved for future generations. Sustainable practices promote resilience, reduce inequality, and support lasting poverty reduction (Singh & Chudasama, 2020; Wei et al., 2021; Tang, 2022; Abdulkareem et al., 2023; Ogbari et al., 2024).

Collectively, these themes indicate that effective poverty alleviation requires a multidimensional approach that combines economic, social, technological, and governance interventions. The literature emphasizes that integrated strategies, tailored to local contexts, are most effective in achieving sustainable improvements in living standards.

3. Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to discern major strategies for alleviating poverty in developing countries. The findings reveal that economic growth and job creation, education and market-relevant skill development, financial inclusion and access to micro-finance services, social protection through social inclusion and safety nets, agriculture through innovation and agri-technology, good governance and transparent resource distribution, ICT, renewable energy solutions, women's empowerment and gender equality, access to healthcare and nutrition services, infrastructure development, and inclusive and sustainable development practices are key strategies for effective poverty alleviation. These findings indicate that multidimensional approaches, integrating economic, social, technological, and governance interventions, are most effective in addressing both structural and immediate causes of poverty.

Economic and social strategies reinforce each other, while inclusive policies ensure marginalized populations benefit, enhancing long-term sustainability. Technological innovations and transparent governance further strengthen the reach and impact of poverty reduction efforts. The study underscores theoretical frameworks that advocate systemic, multidimensional approaches to poverty alleviation and provides practical guidance for policymakers and development practitioners in designing context-specific interventions. Ultimately, alleviating poverty in developing countries requires coordinated, inclusive, and sustainable strategies that holistically address economic, social, and human development needs, promoting equitable growth and improved well-being for all. Future research longitudinal and mixed-methods approaches to assess the long-term effectiveness of key strategies. It should also examine emerging influences such as digitalization, climate resilience, and global shocks, while addressing policy implementation gaps and institutional capacities to link theory with practice.

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