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Dibao and Urban-Rural Integration (URI) for Sustainable Development Goal #1

Hai Jiang (Cody)

Introduction

In China poverty is the most common and severe issue of society. From the beginning, Chinese government had placed elimination of poverty as their first top priority. According to Wang and Zhang (2020) in 1981, 88.32% of population lived in poverty and 43.95% poverty population of the world was in China. Until 2015, the poverty rate was 5.7%, over seven hundred million people lifted out of poverty. Today Chinese government claims that obsolete poverty is eliminated in China. However, relative poverty is still a severe problem in China which significantly hinder Chinese people to achieve sustainable development.

The purpose of this paper is to consider how poverty can be eradicated in all its form in China. Two pieces of research may offer two workable solutions. The first solution is Dibao, a policy which gives direct financial aid to poor (Gao, 2017). Second solution is the development of urban–rural integration (URI) which is considered as an effective way to achieve sustainable development in developing countries (Niu & Xu, 2023). Though two research are using separate ways to respond poverty issue in China, both solutions have potential to address the poverty in China and the world.

The Sustainable Development Goals

In the article *Transforming our world: The 2030 agenda for sustainable development* (2015), United Nations set 17 sustainable developments goals (SDG) of human society. United Nations set those goals to provide a guideline for how we make the world a better place. It represents an ambitious and transformational vision. In this vision humans will build a world without poverty, hunger, disease and want. A place where every life can prosper their population.

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This article is a promise and announcement of humans to create a better world. It promotes humans to improve their world by setting goals.

SDG# Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere

In “Goal 1: Why it Matters” (United Nations, n.d), United Nations gives a comprehensive view of poverty. It shows us why there is poverty, why poverty needs to be solved and how we address poverty. The United Nations claims that there are still 10% of people in this world living in extreme poverty which means there are more than 700 million people floundering to reach clean water, medical help, education, and sanitation. Then, the article explains what causes poverty. Poverty is caused by unemployment, social exclusion, disaster, and other phenomena that stop people from productivity (United Nations, n.d). Human have decreased the rate of extreme poverty, but the issue of relative poverty is still a severe problem that hampered people achieve sustainable development.

Findings and Discussion

According to Wang and Zhang (2020), in 2014, China's multidimensional poverty index was 4.0%, and the multidimensional poverty population was 55.27 million. Depending on definition of poverty, 16.8% of Chinese population can be defined as Multidimensional Poverty poor. Most of poor in China are living in rural area, and the worse situation of Multidimensional Poverty poor is nutrition, school year and cooking fuel. According to Wang and Zhang (2020), the few major challenges of anti-poverty in China are reducing relative poverty in the region, developing vulnerable groups and decreasing the poverty due by diseases and old ages.

Gao (2017) discusses the effectiveness of Dibao—direct financial aid—in anti-poverty. She finds out that Dibao is effective on erasing extreme poverty, but for anti-poverty it is not that efficient since its limited benefits and the wrong targeting and gap in benefits distributed. Dibao

decreases the depth of poverty but not poverty rate. Besides, using different poverty lines affects the effectiveness of Dibao. Dibao is less effective to respond relative poverty because Dibao assistance standards are low compared to average income and consumption levels and the rate at which consumer prices rise, and Dibao's assistance overlooked the needs of education and healthcare (Gao, 2017). Then, the author brings out a few changes that may enhance the effectiveness of Dibao, such as, increase the financial support of Dibao, broaden the targets of Dibao and enrich the measure standards of Dibao (Gao, 2017). This article indicates that Dibao is an effective tool to decrease extreme poverty, but less effective to reduce relative poverty, so with a few changes Dibao may become a better tool to address both extreme poverty and relative poverty (Gao, 2017).

In the research, Niu & Xu (2023) found out the relationship between urban-rural integration (URI) and poverty. Urban-rural integration is a development and realizing of the equivalent life quality between urban and rural residents. The authors claims that URI has an inverted U-shaped relationship with rural poverty, which first intensifies and then slows (Niu & Xu, 2023). The results of spatial effect decomposition, a method to find out the spatial correlation and spatial heterogeneity of the data, showed that there was a spatial effect in the impact of URI on rural poverty in the province and neighboring provinces. Hence, by controlling the rate of URI, governments can reduce poverty in rural areas. However, high URI rate also increases the poverty rate of urban areas. Hence, authors believe Chinese government should focus more on URI and change URI to solve poverty.

In addition, Niu and Xu (2023) also point out the relationship of URI and poverty shows how inequality development causes both rural and urban poverty. When labor flows from countryside to city, the increase of population will cause more pollution, shortage of public

services and unemployment. Hence, the URI needs precise design and management, so that it will have greater benefits than harm. With this research the government can implement URI in a beneficial way and use it to address poverty.

The research mentioned can be used simultaneously to solve poverty in China and two research can complement each other which make them more effective because both methods help rural poor and URI can help those poor which are not the target of Dibao but live a hard live. Also, Dibao can help URI efficiently by stopping too many rural poverty flows into the city since Dibao can provide rural poor enough money so that they do not need to work in the city. By combining both methods, the government may create an effective and comprehensive policy for anti-poverty in rural areas.

Conclusion

Today, poverty remains the biggest obstacle for people to achieve sustainable development. In China, anti-poverty is facing the next stage of challenge which is solving relative poverty. Dibao is one of the practical solutions as a form of financial transformation to poor. URI also provides a solution to decrease rural area poverty. Although these solutions are not perfect and need further research and improvement, both offer a bright future of anti-poverty in China.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the United Nations (n.d) estimates that 71 million additional people will live in extreme poverty. What can be sure is that poverty will remain the greatest problem of human society. In China, the negative effect of COVID-19 pandemic is also serious. Lots of people lost their job and paid much more money on healthcare. Hence, the Dibao and URI is critical for China to address poverty issue. However, without support from local and national governments, poverty issue will not change for poor who live in rural area in China.

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