

GLOBAL POVERTY, INEQUALITY AND ITS IMPACT ON SDG GOALS

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Abstract

This study looks at how global poverty and inequality relate to each other and their impact on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Research aims to study the socioeconomic factors affecting the global progress towards sustainable development. Also, they are the effectiveness of Government policy, and economic inequality, access to education as well as job opportunities on SDG 1 (No Poverty) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequality). Data collection is done with a mixed-methods approach, consisting of the primary online (Google Form) survey of respondents, who are 420 in number, and the secondary data is from major world reports enlisted by the World Bank, UNDP, and OECD. SPSS analysis performed descriptive statistics, Anova, multiple regression tests, to ascertain the predictive relationship between the variables.

Statistical results show that creation of jobs, effectiveness of government policy and access to education has a significant positive effect on SDG progress while economic inequality has a weaker and statistically insignificant direct effect. The R² value of 0.838 indicated that the selected variables explain close to 84% of the variation in SDG progress. Data from countries globally confirmed that, while extreme poverty has decreased over the past decades, still about 838 million people are below the updated \$3/day poverty line. Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia are the most affected regions. The results suggest that reducing inequality and promoting inclusive development remain important global challenges.

The implication of these findings is that increased job creation, education and good governance will work together to create policies for equitable and sustainable development. The study contends that the 2030 Agenda can succeed only if the international community works together in a coordinated manner. There will be a need for strong inter-institutional collaboration and targeting institutions.

Keywords: Global Poverty, Inequality, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Employment Opportunities, Government Policy Effectiveness, Access to Education

Introduction

The fact that global poverty and inequality persist today is one of the biggest challenges to any 2030 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Even if the poverty rates have decreased significantly in the last decades. The COVID-19 pandemic, other shocks like conflicts and climate and the latter shows how fragile these progresses can be and how interlinked the SDG goals are. Poverty is not just about money. It means not having enough food, medical help or school. A big effect of poverty is social exclusion. On the other hand, inequalities in income and wealth worsen disparities in access to capabilities and barriers to access, and hamper progress towards social and environmental goals (SDG 2: zero hunger, SDG 4; quality education; SDG 10; reduced inequalities, and SDG 13). The global levels of poverty and inequality are being studied in this paper. Cut out country level examples. They are one of the drivers which undermine the achievement of the SDGs.

Before 2020, the global reductions in extreme poverty were one of the biggest development wins. Between 1990 and 2019, the number of people living in extreme poverty fell from roughly 2 billion to about 660 million. This represents a decline from some 38 % of the world's population to roughly 8.5% (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2023). The average annual reduction rate from 2015 to 2019 is slower than the one from 2000 to 2014. In fact, the recent one has been just 0.5 percentage points. The COVID-19 infection turned back the years of progress. In 2020, the proportion of the world's population living in extreme poverty was about 9.7%, a big jump. Thus, this increase pushed dozens of millions back into poverty. According to nowcasting in 2022, 8.4% or 670 million of the global population are in extreme poverty. Some 808 million people—almost 1 in 10—could be living in extreme poverty in 2025, according to more recent estimates that employed a new threshold. If there is not a major change in trends, it is forecast that around 7% ($\approx$ 575 million) of the global population could still be in extreme poverty by 2030, undermining the SDG 1 goal of ending it (United Nations, 2023).

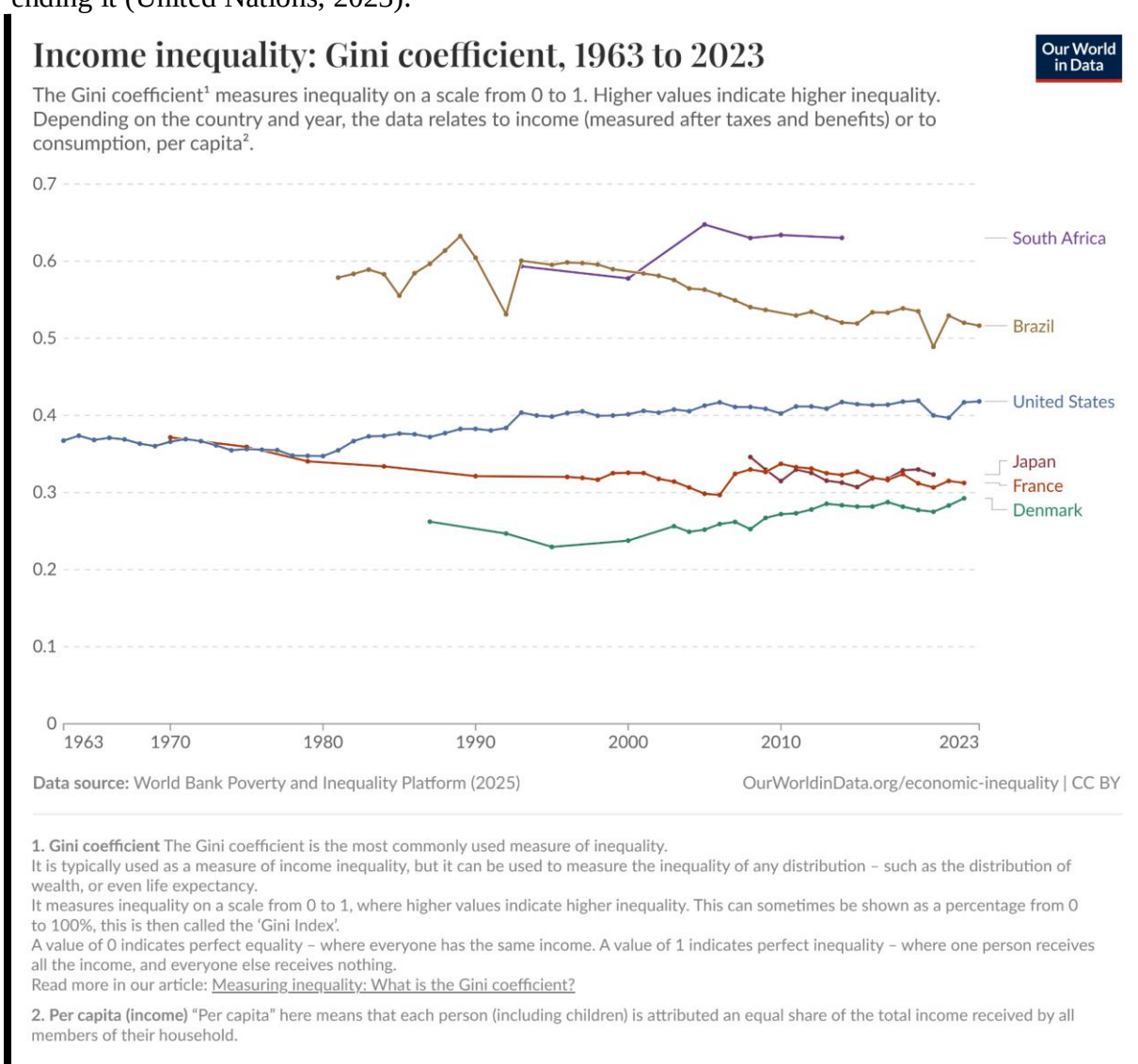


Figure 1: Income Equality: Gini Coefficient, 1963 to 2023

(Source: OurWorldindata, 2021)

At the same time, inequality—or rather inequality within countries—has increased. Some inequality between countries may have narrowed but internally there is widening

inequality in income, wealth and opportunities. The Gini coefficient, which ranges from 0 for perfect equality to 100 for total inequality, typically varies from 25–60 in national settings. Many countries which fall under low and middle income show huge inequality. This restricts the growth of people with respect to poverty and inclusion. According to the guide “Inequality and the SDGs” from the UN, ignoring differences in income comes with heavy economic and social price. This includes growth restrictions, social instability, and less social returns. In addition, income inequality in a number of OECD countries has reached historically high levels. This has taken place over the last three decades. It is partly due to tax changes, technologization, and globalisation.

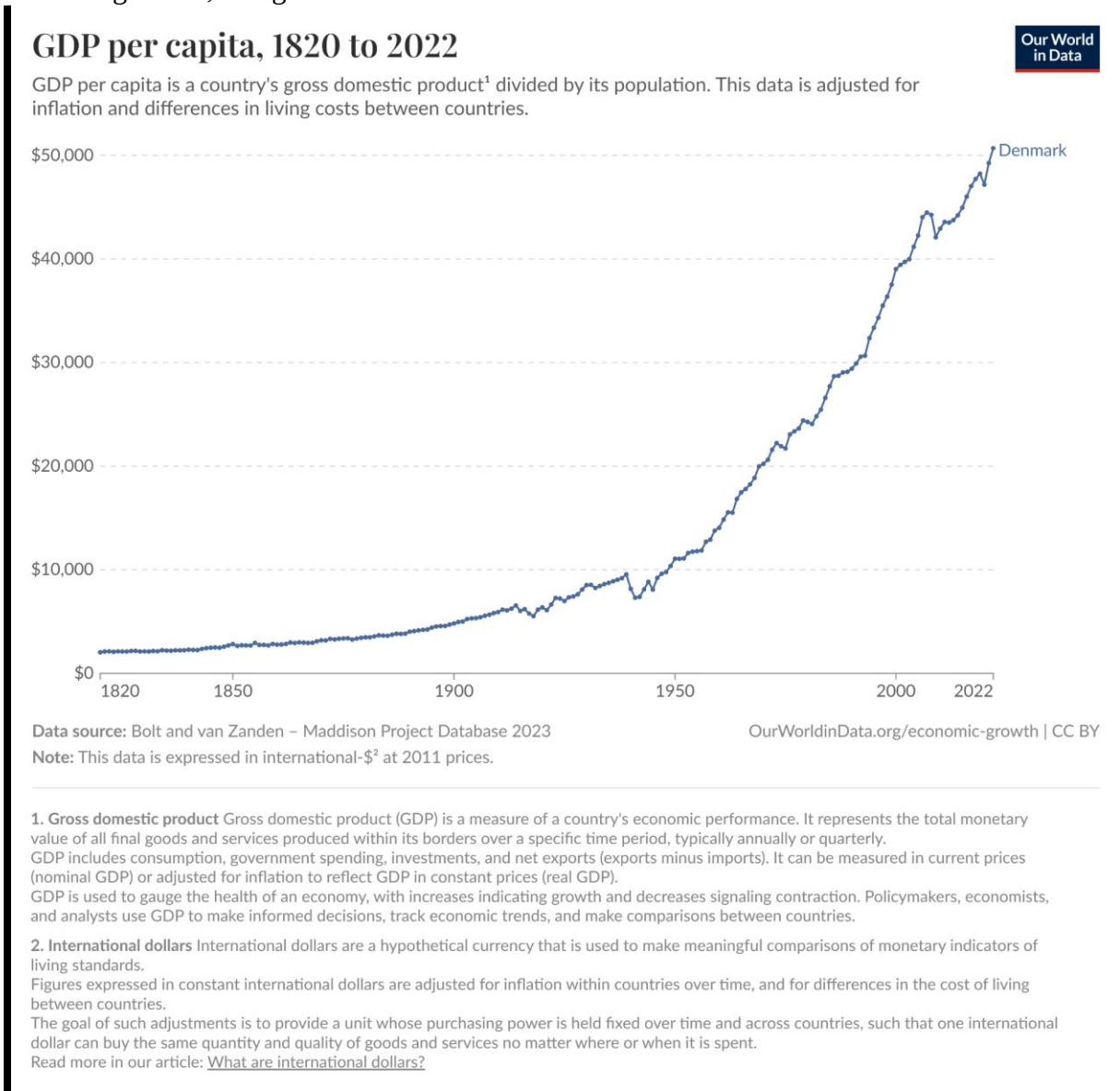


Figure 2: GDP per Capita, 1820 to 2022

(Source: OurWorldindata, 2021)

The earnings of a person depend upon the average income in the country and the position that person occupies within the country's income distribution. These charts depict the average income in different countries across the globe. The average daily income of a country is represented by the height of that country's bar while the width represents the country's population size. The chart has arranged the countries according to their income. The poorest

country, South Sudan, is on the very left, where the average person lives on \$1.12 per day. In contrast, the richest country, Luxembourg, is on the right; here, people live on \$86 on average.

For the past 200 years, the average income in Denmark has been \$57 per day today. This chart shows that only a few countries in the world have such high average incomes close to that of the United States. The average income being far above the poverty line indicates that the poverty existing in Denmark is due to inequality. This chart clearly shows that many countries in the world have very low average incomes. Most people in the world live in countries where average income is much lower than the poverty threshold in rich countries. 82% of the world's population lives in countries where average incomes are less than \$20 per day (United Nations Development Programme, 2024).

There are mutual relationships present in poverty and inequality. Inequality reduces the power of pro-poor growth to reduce poverty. Thus, in a highly unequal society, a large share of income gains goes to the already well-off, with little for the poor. Paraphrase this (20 words):

Consequently, sweeping inequality makes it impossible for many to advocate for a fairer distribution of resources from authorities. Structural inequality in land, education, gender, ethnicity, region (e.g. rural vs. urban), and social exclusion converge to exacerbate these dynamics. What this means is that poverty and inequality affect many SDGs, not just SDG 1 and SDG 10.

Health and well-being (SDG 3) refer to the lack of the most basic health services, clean water and sanitation of poor communities, as well as their vulnerability to disease burdens. When households spend money on health services, it can push them further into poverty. For example, around the world, many households fall below the global poverty line of \$3.65/day because of health spending (United Nations, 2023). Poorer well-being reduces educational success, economic productivity and resilience to shocks. Likewise, education (SDG 4) suffers. Families with lower incomes may not send children to school; or may keep them engaged in work. In either case, deprivation gets perpetuated across generations. Economic growth and decent work are also affected (goal 8). High inequality can encroach social cohesion, and reduce people's capacity to consume goods and services, and can undermine long-term stability of growth rates.

In addition, poverty and inequality aggravate the vulnerabilities to climate change and environmental degradation thereby making SDG 13, 14, and 15 difficult to promote. People in poor communities live on and off marginal lands, have limited capacity to adapt and have no insurance against climate shocks. Climate disasters are hurting the poorer sections of the society. Moreover, inequality can keep redistributive climate policies – like carbon taxes, subsidies or infrastructural adaptation – from working or being legitimate because low-trust, highly unequal societies are less prone to collective action.

To illustrate country-level variation, consider India. In the last ten years, India has pulled hundreds of millions out of extreme poverty with its fast-paced economic growth and targeted social programs. According to some recent reports, about 270 million Indians came out of extreme poverty between 2011-12 and 2022-23 (Business Standard 2025). The share has become about 5.3% now. Even so, income inequalities, access to services, gender and regional inequality remain a reality in India. "Approximately 385 million people in Sub-Saharan Africa were under extreme poverty in 2013. Between 1990 and 2019 the poverty rate in the region declined from 54% to 35 % but due to population growth the absolute number of poor people increased (Business Today, 2025). Sub-Saharan Africa the region continues to hold the largest concentration of the world's extreme poor." Across several African nations, there's a

consistent and high-income inequality rate. The social safety nets are also weak. Many Latin American countries are classified as middle-income but face a considerable challenge in inequality. Several have Gini coefficients here the 45 or 50 marks, while pockets of poverty exist in underdeveloped regions.

Bolivia is a striking example of a country that has seen improvements in school attendance without the same, or at least not in the same way, as reductions in poverty and inequality. This illustrates trade-offs and policy misalignment across SDGs (e.g. SDG 4 vs SDG 1/10). Studies on SDG progress in Nigeria, Kenya, and South Africa suggest that structural inequalities, governance challenges, and uneven social investments impede poverty reduction. Countries coming out of conflict, fragile states, or climate-vulnerable settings, face appropriately even more severe constraints: in these contexts, poverty and inequality are already deeply entrenched, and institutional weaknesses magnify their adverse feedback loops. Overall, the two serious problems of poverty and inequality are acting as a serious drag on the ambitious SDG agenda. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) emphasize the principle of leaving no one behind. However, the data indicate that unless some form of redistribution, inclusiveness, and pro-poor measures are deliberately adopted, many goals may well be out of reach of large sections of humanity.

Objectives

- To understand the threat of Global poverty upon society due to increasing inequality
- To address the SDG goals to minimise the impact of poverty and inequality worldwide
- To examine how job access and educational opportunities can lessen poverty and inequality nationally and globally
- To recommend effective ways for eradicating inequality as well as poverty by strength SDG goals

Method

This study uses mixed-methods research design. It will combine primary quantitative data collected through an online survey. Also, it will use secondary qualitative and statistical data to benefit from the various global development databases. The aim was to analyze perceptions, experiences and awareness of poverty and inequality and their impact on progress towards the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This approach is helpful for triangulation purposes, helping in validity and coverage of findings.

Primary Data Collection

The conference surveyed thousands of people from the countries of India, Nigeria, the United Kingdom, Brazil, and others for a total of maybe five months. The test participants were recruited from various sources. People were asked to take part and become an honoured test taker due to social networking sites and research indexes. In order to participate, volunteers had to be above 18 years of age and not a total idiot when it came to current matters. The new survey had a big goal: try to know how people in many different areas feel about the impact of poverty and inequality upon society.

The questions in the survey were closed or opportunistic. The study gathered information fixed into simple categories on where the loss or gain of people is coming from. I mean from what they earn to where they get their money. The questions that were asked to the people to take part showed them exactly what they wanted to hear. Respondents were asked what they think about national and local government efforts regarding poverty and inequality. The programme was made up of google forms which only took about 10 minutes to fill in. They finally consented before they even thought of even giving the information. The information that the author is getting is being screened carefully. After censoring nonsensical responses that were unverifiable, there remained a total of 420 authenticated answers.

Secondary Data Collection

Apart from the primary survey, data from credible global sources was gathered for the macro-level context. The other sources for this data are The World Bank's World Development Indicators, The OECD's Income Inequality Data, and The UNDP's HDR 2023. Recent measurements are available for Global poverty rates, Gini coefficients and other SDG progress indicators. The report also looks for evidence from other sources to confirm their results, and those outside sources confirm what they have discovered.

Data Analysis

The researchers used descriptive statistics like percentages, means, and frequency distributions to analyze the survey data collected from the quantitative survey. Cross-tabulation helped to find the links between respondents' income levels and their views on SDGs progress. Thematic analysis of the qualitative responses provided by the open-ended questions using content analysis helped in identifying the themes like perceptions about inequality, barriers in alleviating poverty, and trust over government. Combining both datasets created a better sense of how individual experiences relate to global patterns.

Ethical Considerations

The conduct of the research was ethically sound. The identity of the participants was kept anonymous. It was informed consent and participation was voluntary. Data was secure and only used for academic purposes.

In general, the mixed approach is already anchored by an online survey of 420 respondents with supportive global datasets. This allows for greater in-depth learning regarding how poverty and inequality may influence progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

Dependent Variable:

Progress Toward Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

— The overall progress or effectiveness in achieving SDGs (especially SDG 1 and SDG 10) as perceived by respondents.

Independent Variables:

1. Economic Inequality
2. Access to Education
3. Government Policy Effectiveness
4. Employment

Questionnaire Design

Each question will be answered using a 5-point Likert Scale:

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

1. What is your age?
2. What is your gender?
3. What is education?
4. What is your occupation?

Independent Variable 1: Economic Inequality

1. Income and wealth are unevenly distributed in my country.
2. The gap between the rich and poor has increased in recent years.
3. Economic inequality limits access to basic needs such as housing, healthcare, and food.
4. Reducing economic inequality is essential for achieving sustainable development goals.

Independent Variable 2: Access to Education

1. Quality education is accessible to people from all income groups in my country.
2. Lack of education opportunities contributes to the cycle of poverty.
3. Investment in education can significantly reduce inequality in society.

4. Access to higher education is still limited for low-income families.

Independent Variable 3: Government Policy Effectiveness

1. My government has implemented effective policies to reduce poverty.
2. Social protection programs (e.g., subsidies, welfare) reach the people who need them most.
3. Corruption and mismanagement hinder poverty-reduction initiatives.
4. There are adequate monitoring and evaluation of programs addressing inequality and SDGs.

Independent Variable 4: Employment Opportunities

1. There are enough employment opportunities for the working-age population in my country.
2. Unemployment or underemployment contributes significantly to poverty levels.
3. Skills development and vocational training improve access to decent jobs.
4. Government support for entrepreneurship and small businesses helps reduce inequality.

Dependent Variable: Progress Toward SDG Goals

1. My country is making significant progress toward achieving the SDG targets.
2. Efforts to reduce poverty (SDG 1) have shown visible improvement in recent years.
3. Inequality (SDG 10) remains a major challenge despite policy efforts.
4. Achieving SDGs by 2030 is realistic given the current rate of progress.

Results

Primary data analysis

The analysis of data collected through an online survey of 420 respondents using SPSS on relationship between the four independent variables namely Economic inequality (IV1), Access to Education (IV2), Government Policy Effectiveness (IV3) and Employment Opportunities (IV4) and dependent variable namely Progress Towards Sustainable Development Goals (DV) The measurement model's validity was tested, through a few descriptive, reliability, correlation and regression analysis. The analyses were run to check the predictive influence of independent variables on dependent variables.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
IV1	421	4.00	20.00	14.9905	3.90847
IV2	418	5.00	20.00	15.9785	3.83747
IV3	421	4.00	20.00	15.7458	3.86123
IV4	421	4.00	20.00	15.9596	3.88290
DV	421	4.00	20.00	15.8385	3.97942
Valid N (listwise)	418				

As per the SPSS output, descriptive statistics of the variables had a sample size in the range of 418 to 421. Thus, there are no missing values and the responses are consistent. The average scores of the variables were fairly high, suggesting that the respondents tend to agree with the statements in the Likert-scale questionnaire. To be specific, Economic Inequality (IV1) has a mean of 14.99 (SD = 3.90), Access to Education (IV2) has a mean of 15.98 (SD = 3.83), Government Policy Effectiveness (IV3) has a mean of 15.75 (SD = 3.86) and Employment Opportunities (IV4) has a mean of 15.96 (SD = 3.88). The dependent variable Progress Toward SDGs yielded a mean of 15.84 (SD = 3.97) The average rating being higher for all constructs indicates that most of the respondents think that positive association exists

between access to education, effective policies, job opportunities and sustainable development progress.

Table 2: KMO test

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Adequacy.	Measure of Sampling	.892
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square of df	2259.642
	Sig.	.000

Prior to the commencement of the regression analysis, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity were conducted to examine the sampling adequacy and factorability. According to the KMO value of 0.892, which exceeds the minimum requirement of 0.6, the data were suitable for factor analysis. Thus, the sample size was adequate for factor analysis. The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity produced a chi-square value of 2259.642 and a significance level of $p < 0.001$. This shows there are strong correlations among the variables, hence confirming the validity of carrying out a multivariate analysis.

Table 3: Regression Analysis

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.915 ^a	.838	.836	1.60887

a. Predictors: (Constant), IV4, IV1, IV2, IV3
ANOVAa

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5512.352	4	1378.088	532.396	.000 ^b
	Residual	1069.035	413	2.588		
	Total	6581.388	417			

a. Dependent Variable: DV

b. Predictors: (Constant), IV4, IV1, IV2, IV3

Coefficientsa

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.161	.367		.440	.660
	IV1	.024	.027	.024	.913	.362
	IV2	.156	.046	.151	3.396	.001
	IV3	.266	.052	.257	5.124	.000
	IV4	.542	.046	.528	11.861	.000

a. Dependent Variable: DV

The data in the Model Summary show that the R value and R square value is 0.915 and R square value is 0.838 and adjusted R square is 0.836. These results show that about 83.8 % of the variation on which this dependent variable measures (Progress Toward SDGs) are explained by these four independent variables. This shows that economic inequality, education

access, effective government policy, employment chances fit the data extremely well. In other words, these factors predict SDG implementation progress at the societal/national level quite effectively. The Standard Error of the Estimate, which has a value of 1.60887, is considerably low. As such, we can conclude that the regression model gives accurate and consistent predictions.

The overall model is significant as confirmed by the ANOVA table. The regression model achieved an F-value of 532.396 with $p = 0.000$, very significant at the 0.001 level. As per the testing it is statistically significant that dependent variables collected affect the dependent variable. Hence at least one of the independent variables has a significant effect on SDG progress.

The Coefficient Table shows the contributions of each independent variable in the model. The B values and beta value assist in revealing the strength and direction that each predictor has. Of the four predictor variables, Employment Opportunities (IV4) had the largest standardized beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.528$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that this is the strongest driver of progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. We see that improving access to jobs and the quality of jobs can enhance national efforts to reduce poverty (SDG 1) and reduce inequalities (SDG 10).

The effectiveness of government policy as the second strongest predictor, a standardized β coefficient of government policy 0.257 ($p < 0.001$). International experience shows that strong, transparent and inclusive governance contributes to the successful implementation of SDGs. Policy design, public administration and anti-corruption measures produce better distribution of the resources. (19 words)

Access to Education (IV2) was also a significant predictor ($\beta = 0.151$, $p = 0.001$). According to this finding, education enables the community to escape poverty and inequality in human capital development, employment potential, and civic participation. Respondents probably think greater access to education equips people to more meaningfully contribute to sustainable development processes.

On the contrary, Economic Inequality (IVI) had a considerably weak and not statistically significant relationship with SDG progress ($\beta = 0.024$, $p = 0.362^{**}$). This means the people questioned think inequality is still important, but it is no longer seen as a trigger for progress on the SDGs in today's economy and policies. Addressing poverty is key to ensuring the efficacy of other SDGs as actors engage in various local endeavours to tackle education and employment.

In general, the regression model highlights the multi-faceted and inter-linked aspects of poverty and inequality. According to our survey, contributing toward SDG progress takes the form of employment opportunities and further effective governance. It indeed reaffirms global findings which state that inclusive economic growth and quality institutions are crucial for sustainable development. The finding is in line with the analysis of the World Bank (2023) and UNDP (2024) which highlight that decent jobs (SDG 8) and strong institutions (SDG 16) accelerate progress on multiple SDGs at once.

Based on the SPSS results, it can be confirmed that the model is robust since it explains 83.8% of the SDG. The impact of availability of jobs, access to education, and good government policy is significantly positive while economic inequality's effect is weak but not negligible. This shows that creating jobs, improving governance and increasing access to education are the most effective levers to accelerate the SDGs overall. For this end, policymakers must focus on generating sustainable jobs, providing equal education access, and promoting transparent and accountable governance frameworks. This way, the reduction of poverty and inequality goals can be reached.

Secondary data analysis

Recent evidence from the World Bank and other institutions suggests that although extreme poverty has been reduced, inequality remains persistent and threatens the attainment of most SDGs. As per World Bank's Global Poverty Update of June 2025, as per new 2021 Purchasing Power Parities (PPPs), the international poverty line is revised and valued at US \$3.00 per person per day, earlier valued at \$2.15 (2017 PPP). In 2022, about 838 million people were estimated to be living in extreme poverty. This estimate was based on the updated global poverty line of \$2.15 a day (World Bank, 2023). The increase of about 125 million more people in extreme poverty presents a substantial upward revision. It highlights that poverty metrics are sensitive to the definitions employed.

The West African region has the highest concentration of people living in extreme poverty. The revised estimates show that the estimated poverty rate in the region was upwardly revised from 37.0 % to 45.5 % in 2022. In comparison to other regions, South Asia saw a downward revision in the poverty rate due to new survey data, which was revised downward from 9.7 % to 7.3 %. Some regions or places are catching up, while some are lagging further behind (World Bank, 2024). Worldwide extreme poverty is projected to decline from 10.5% in 2022 to around 9.9% by 2025, assuming current trends continue, according to the world bank. Yet, even if there is a decline, it appears that the target to end extreme poverty by 2030 (SDG 1) is less likely under present trajectory (World Bank, 2023).

India's case study offers convincing evidence per the data as has been shown. Approximately 16.0% of people in 2011-2012 existed under extreme poverty but it fell to 2.3% in 2022-2023. Likewise, the LMIC (lower-middle income countries) poverty line of \$3.65/day (older PPPs) or its revised version of \$4.20/day yield a similar fall in poverty in India (World Bank, 2025). Poverty fell from 61.8 % to 28.1 % under the older LMIC line and under the revised to about 23.9 %. Poverty is not just about money but also education and living conditions. India's MPI score declined from 53.8 % to 15.5%. However, obstacles continue to exist: shortcomings in the completion of education, sanitation and clean water are other contributors to non-monetary poverty.

On the inequality front, reports show mixed progress. The Gini index of consumption-based inequality in India improved marginally from 28.8 in 2011-12 to 25.5 in 2022-23 (UNESCAP, 2018). While the income distribution in India is broadly in conformity with its economic growth, data from other sources, like the World Inequality Database shows, otherwise. For instance, India's Gini coefficient for income rose from about 52 in 2004 to 62 in 2023 according to the World Inequality Database. This indicates that the disparity in earnings and wealth is growing in India. Studies show inequality is persistent in many regions. Furthermore, reducing it takes longer than reducing poverty in such regions (World Health Organization, 2023). These insights are derived from poverty & equity briefs by the World Bank. For example, there is a global or country-level brief which states that the consumption inequality in some areas fell only marginally after the social protection programs.

The new global poverty data also shows how conflict, fragility, and vulnerability exacerbate poverty and inequality. According to the World Bank report, increasingly, a growing share of the poor are living in conflict-affected and fragile states. Settings like these often have poorer institutions, less access to education and healthcare and greater inequality—all factors that slow or stop SDG progress.

In short, published secondary data from the World Bank (and others) gives strong context: while it shows that many countries have seen a drop in poverty, it also confirms that inequality remains persistent, especially in terms of income or other non-monetary measures. Some areas and numerous countries affected by conflict are falling behind, despite uneven progress. When looking overall at progress towards SDGs, these trends suggest that while some

goals are being approached (extreme poverty, some health/education indicators) considerable challenges remain for reducing inequality (SDG 10), ensuring quality education (SDG 4), health (SDG 3), clean water and sanitation (SDG 6), and life in decent living conditions more broadly. Policymakers should pay special attention to measurement definitions, conflict states and non-monetary deprivations in order to generate an acceleration towards the SDGs.

Discussion

The results of the primary analysis and secondary analysis depict a clear picture of how poverty and inequality affect the global quest of SDGs. The result of SPSS regression methodology indicates that there are three independent components that have an impact on progress on SDGs. That is employment opportunity, effectiveness of government policy and access to education. The impact of all these is significantly positive. While the economic inequality impact is not statistically significant but impact is positive. The findings closely match the World Bank (2025) report that provides the right conditions for inclusive economic growth, good governance, and equitable educational systems will be central to sustainable development, as remarked in the international studies by UNDP (2024) and OECD (2023). The analysis from the regression generated a high R^2 - 0.838, which can be interpreted to imply that these dimensions together explain most of the variation in SDG progress. It shows that the social, economic, and institutional dimensions are all interlinked.

According to the UN (2023), a focus on “Decent Work and Economic Growth” (SDG 8) is a key accelerator for various SDGs. The present study finds numerous employment opportunities significantly influence SDG progress. The standardized beta coefficient for employment opportunities ($\beta = 0.528$) indicates that job creation, provision of fair wages, and stability of employment were viewed by respondents as foundational in alleviating poverty and inequality. According to the World Bank (2024), countries with greater levels of labour-force participation and quality employment tend to perform better across SDGs 1, 8 and 10. Employment does not only bring in income but also strengthens social inclusion and empowers people to invest in education and health, thereby creating a virtuous cycle of sustainable development.

The second factor that determines the SDGs progress, which is the effectiveness of government policy, is also strongly correlated with SDG progress ($\beta = 0.257$) This finding is in line with the UNDP’s Human Development Report 2023, which stresses the importance of institutional strength, corruption control and policy coherence to achieve sustainability targets. Good governance increases transparency, fairly uses resources, and ensures poor people use welfare funds. Survey responses of qualitative nature highlighted that poor governance and weak policy implementation are one of the major barriers to SDG progress in many developing countries. According to OECD (2023), similar results occur when governance failures and political instability delay the action on the SDGs, particularly in conflict-affected or institutionally fragile regions.

Another significant predictor was access to education ($\beta=0.151$), reaffirming the importance of human capital in reducing poverty and inequality. Education empowers individuals with the skill set that is beneficial to getting a job. Further, it also helps one innovate. Thus, these are all important elements for long-term development. According to Education Finance Watch 2024 of the World Bank, an additional year of education increases average earnings by about 9%, which helps families break the cycle of poverty. Countries that have placed more investment into education have had quicker success in some areas around gender equality, health and social mobility. According to international research, analysis of the survey revealed that the respondents generally agree investing in education is the way to achieve SDG 1, 4 and 10 in the future. On the other hand, economic inequality ($\beta = 0.024$, $p = 0.362$) did not significantly affect SDG. Although it sounds paradoxical, this outcome is

possible because the impact of inequality works indirectly through other variables like governance, education and employment. The respondents may perceive inequality but that policies which create jobs or enhance schools are more concrete responses to poverty. However, global reports warn that ignoring inequality can be dangerous. As per World Inequality Report 2023, more than 50% of total income in the world is captured by the top 10% earners, reports the World Inequality Report 2023. Based on the regression result, inequality is statistically insignificant for this sample, however global evidence continues to stress the long-term negative impact of inequality on SDG 10 and beyond.

The analysis of data is beginning to show that the progress in reducing global poverty is slowing down, along with becoming persistent inequality between countries. According to official statistics, over 839 million people are living on a measly 3 dollars a day in extreme poverty and nearly all of them are concentrated in Africa as well as parts of Asia. Rather than benefiting every part of countries like India and China, economic growth is still affected by some certain sides. Limiting the advances in education, gender equality, and wealth restricts overall success. Inclusive employment and better service to the government helps reconstruct, but the counter could do the opposite.

Even though the findings are strong, this research has some weaknesses. The researchers used an online survey consisting of 420 respondents drawn through the convenience sampling method. For this reason, the sample may not be representative of the global population of poor, especially those in remote or low-connectivity areas. Also, the study uses self-reported perceptions which may lead to subjective bias, social desirability effect, or different interpretations of SDG progress. Because this study is cross-sectional, it caught the opinions of the respondents at one moment in time. Thus, a longitudinal trend cannot be observed. Future studies should employ larger and stratified samples from different parts of the world, different designs (quantitative and qualitative), and panel or longitudinal data to track changes over time.

To sum up, job opportunities, education accessibility, and government policies (including vision, mission, planning, and execution) are the strongest drivers towards sustainable development, as evidenced by both primary and secondary evidence. Currently inequality in the current model is statistically weaker, but globally it is the underlying factor. The findings highlight integrated policy interventions to strengthen labor markets, improve educational systems and enforcements, and good governance. The interaction between technology, climate resilience and digital inclusion with these socio-economic dimensions will be studied in the future for achieving SDG by 2030.

Conclusion

Researchers analysed both initial data and unique information collected on their own to understand the effects of poverty and inequality on getting to the Eight Sustainable Development goals. According to the results of a 420-member poll, opportunity, education, and how well the government works are the most contributing factors of the "SDG progress," while economic inequality is less important. The model used to study the power of economic factors succeeded 88% of the time, showing that these variables work together to make 84% of the sustainable development. The World Bank, the UN Development Programme, and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development had found that this helped to make several big goals in the 2023 agenda.

Global progress on reducing poverty separates the rich and the poor. The World Bank 2025 statistics show that roughly 838 million remain devastated by excessive poverty, the most in Sub-Saharan Africa. Since of this the differences between poor and wealthy families affluent biggest decreases lower, they become. No progress is being made towards eliminating poverty

and income inequality globally because those issues are not dealt with separately but as one big issue, in combination with many other things.

In order to fully stop the continuing effects of poverty and others it would take a nation and worldwide agreement to react and enforce it. Government officials should have a focus on doing this by using the best economic methods, creating education for all, and using honest data for everything. The study's findings are somewhat limited by the amount of people studied and data they collected for themselves, but they can help fund future research.

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