



An Overview of Socio-Economic Issues and Challenges of Tribal Development in India

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Abstract

A tribe is a community where they are self contained unit. It constitutes a society in itself. Thus we may define tribe as a collection of Individual sharing a common culture. Culture is used here to denote those traditional beliefs, arts and practices which an Individual acquires as a member of a particular society. It is a society with clear linguistic boundary, cultural boundary, and political boundary. In India there is a various types of tribe are present like- aboriginals, adivasis, forest tribe, hill tribes, primitive tribes, etc. they all have their own culture. To preserve their culture many of the tribes are not interested to adopt non-tribe culture because they have feared to loss their own identity. But apart from this many of the tribe wants to adopt non-tribe culture for better life also government want to develop these people.

The main idea behind this research article is to provide an overview of issues and challenges in the development of tribal area or tribal people. This article provides some suggestion in the tribal development or also focuses on the current government policies regarding the tribal people. After the independence (1947) we are seeing the less development till now due to tribal identity fear but we need to give more focus on this community to achieve the vision of all people development. They are the most important part of our country we need to push them; we need to educate them for their development.

Key Words- Tribal, Development, Socio-Economic

Introduction

“A tribe consists of a group of families who are bound together by kinship, usually descending from a common mythical or legendary ancestor and who live in common region, speak a common dialect, and have a common history”

India has the largest number of tribal population in the world. It is important to note that there is

no homogeneous category of ‘Scheduled Tribes’. Each tribe has a distinct identity, each with its own religion, customs and way of life. There are over 750 Scheduled Tribes living in 26 states in India. The majority of the tribes reside in forest area of Central and East India and in North East India. The rights of the Scheduled Tribes are protected by Article 19(5) of the constitution of India where the state has reserved the right to impose reasonable restriction on freedom to move freely throughout the territory of India and to reside and settle in part of the territory of India for the protection of the interests of any Scheduled Tribe. The emphasis on mobility and territory pertaining to the interest of Tribes indicates the significance of land and territory with regard to their rights. Schedules (5) and (6) of the constitution is special provisions for the tribal communities in Central and North-East India respectively.

Important Feature of Tribal Economy

The socio-economic structure in tribal communities is markedly different from that of the non-tribal or advanced groups of people. They have a very simple technology which fits well with their ecological surroundings and conservative outlook. Moreover, their economy can be said to be ‘subsistence type’. They practice different types of occupation and sustain themselves and live on ‘marginal economy’. Some of the basic features of tribal economy are given below.

1. **Small Economy:** Small economy is fundamental characteristic of primitive life. Most (but not all) of the resources, goods and service-transactions take place within a small economy, geo-geographical area and within a community of persons numbered in hundreds or thousands.
2. **Simple Technology:** Compared to the industrialized economies, the technology adopted in tribal economy is much simpler and crude. Tools are either made by the user himself or are acquired for a fee from craftsmen or from manufacturing groups.
3. **Geographical or Cultural Isolation:** Tribal lives mostly in secluded and isolated areas and maintains their distinct cultural heritage. They are, generally hesitant in intermingling with the non-tribal, culturally and adopting the non-tribal concept for developing their economy.

The structure of tribal economy is generally based of forests and sees and forest for coastal and island tribal economy, at the economic and cultural level, the family is a unit of both production and consumption. The community itself acts like a cooperative unit, and the tribal communities living in a village or location are economically inter-dependent. The distribution is generally based on gift and ceremonial exchange.

Two economic features are generally rampant in tribal economy can be mentioned. They are: absence of profit motives in economic dealings, and presence of periodical local markets.

Thus, the following fundamental characteristics of tribal economy can be mentioned as-

1. Forest – based economy
2. The family as a unit of production, consumption and pattern of labor
3. Simple technology
4. Absence of profit motive like in economic dealings
5. The community; a co-operative unit
6. Gift and ceremonial exchange
7. Periodical local market
8. Inter-dependence
9. The economic institution of ‘Dhangar’ (Dhangar is a most familiar word for the tribes like the Oraon, Munda and Ho).
10. Co-operation, not competition prevalent in tribal economy

Thus, it can be concluded that a tribe is a social group of people inhabiting a definite territory or claiming to occupy a common territory, known by a common name, speaking a common dialect, sharing a common culture, showing behavior of an endogamous group, observing common taboos, working together under distinctive social and political system, keeping full faith in their leaders, and living in a self-sufficient district economy based on mutual co-operation and Inter-dependence.

Economies of Tribes- Three dominant Economies of the tribes in India are-

- 1) **Hunting, Fishing and Gathering:** A large number of tribes live in isolation in forests and depend upon hunting, fishing and food gathering. Some of the tribes which practice these occupation. The main tribes which practice these professions are the Raji in Uttar Pradesh; Kuki in West Bengal; Hill-Maria in Chhattisgarh; Juang in Orissa, Chenchu and Yandi in Andhra Pradesh; Koya, Reddi, Kadar and Paliyan in Tamil Nad;, Bhil, Garasia in Maharashtra and Gujrat; Bhil, Garasia and Sahariya in Rajasthan and Kuki, Konyak and Naga in Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh.
- 2) **Shifting Cultivation and Lumbering:** Shifting cultivation is said to be as old as history of agriculture itself. In this type of cultivation, a piece of forest land is cleared by slash-and-burn technique and crops are grown. After 2-3, the fertility of the soil is reduced and the farmer shifts to another piece of land.

This is the reason that it is called shifting agriculture. It is known by different names in different parts of the country. It is called Jhum or Jum in north-east India, Kumari in

Western Ghats, Watra in south-east Rajasthan and Penda, Bewae or Dahia and deppa in different parts of Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh. Lumbering involves obtaining wood from the forests.

- 3) **Sedentary Cultivation and Animal Husbandry:** Sedentary cultivation is a type of agriculture in which the farmer grows crops to meet his own requirements and not much is left for sale in the market. This is not an advanced type of cultivation and generally practiced by the tribal people along with animal husbandry.

The main tribes adopting these profession are the Tharu, Maghi Khasa, Bhoksa, Kol and Bhotias in Uttar Pradesh; Munda, Ho, Oraon, Tamaria, Korwa and Santhal in Jharkhand; Santhal, Polia, Bhadra, Baija, and Gond in Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh, Badaga, Irula, Parga and Malydi in Tamil Nadu, Badaga, Koya, Irula and Kota in Andhra Pradesh; Bhil, Dubla, Raiwari, Barali, Koli, Dhamalia, etc. in Maharashtra and Gujarat, and Bhil, Garasiya and Meena in Rajasthan.

These are the three main economic activities done by tribes.

Issues and Challenges of Socio-Economic Development of Tribes in India

Social issues and challenges of the tribal people: There are many social issues and challenges in the development of tribal people in India.

1. **Illiteracy among tribal is a major hindrance to their development:** After providing free and compulsory education to all by the government most of the tribal people are deprived from the education. The main reason behind this low level of illiteracy is their remote location, where teacher doesn't want to go. They also follow their superstitions and myths forbid them from acquiring education.
2. **Lack of nutrition and poor health:** Due to the unhygienic condition, tribal people suffer from many infectious diseases with these diseases they are unable to focus on their development. They also suffer from the malnutrition due to the inadequate food and nutrition.
3. **Problem of assimilation with non-tribal population:** most of the tribal people are doesn't want to come with the mainstream people due to the fear of their identity. They also do not allow the non-tribal people in their area. This is the one imp issues in tribal development.
4. **Land alienation:** The land alienation for the tribal people occurred when the British to take over the tribal regions for the resources. Cutting of forest, creation of dams, mines-excavation also led to the displacement of the tribal leaving them homeless and displaced.

Economical Issues and Challenges of the Tribal People: There are many economical issues and challenges in the development of tribal people in India.

1. **Lack of adequate sources of income:** Tribal economy is mostly based on the nonprofit economy due to this tribal people doesn't have the adequate income to full fill their desire so they borrow money from the money lenders and Zamidaar. Money lender exploits the tribal people. These are the issues in the tribal area people.
2. **Poverty and unemployment:** The locations of the tribal people are away from the mainstream people or they are totally dependent on the forest resources and animal husbandry for their livelihood. They don't have any other employment for their livelihood so they are living in extreme poverty which is very big hindrance in the development of tribal people.
3. **Mismatch in demand and supply of tribal products:** Tribes made their product with forest resources there is a huge demand for tribal artifacts, textiles, ornaments, painting, potteries, can and bamboo products and organic and natural food products but the supply side of this economy is way below the demand side and thus the community fails to profit from its produce. Thus efficient production and effective promotion become imperative for economic development of this community.

Government Policies to Develop the Tribal People

The government of India established TRIFED (Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Limited) on August 1987 under the multi state co-operative societies act 1984. It is a national level co-operative body its main objective is to ensure socio-economic development of the Indian Tribal community by institutionalizing the trade of minor Forest produce and surplus agricultural produce cultivated by them. TRIFED has launched a chain of retail outlet stores called 'TRIBES INDIA' through which TRIFED procures and markets tribal arts and crafts items. There are now 130 retail outlets across India and they cater to both domestic as well as the international markets.

The Van Dhan Yojana was spearheaded by TRIFED, was introduced on 14th April, 2018 and has been implemented in 27 states and 307 districts. The aim of Van Dhan Yojana is to skill upgrading and capacity building of tribes to promote enterprises and marketing skill in them. Some other policies are as following-

- 1) **Eklavya Model Residential School (EMRS):** To provide the professional courses to the tribes (ST) it is high quality and high level education for scheduled tribes' students in remote area, to allow them to take advantage of the courses it help them for the public and private job. In this scheme 12 Eklavya Model Day Boarding school is also to be established to facilitate boarding and lodging to the tribal student.

- 2) **Van Bandhu Kalyan Yojana:** Holistic development and welfare of the tribal population is the main aim of this scheme. It raises the quality of life; improving the standard of education; Bridging infrastructural gaps etc.
- 3) **Pradhanmantri JI-Van Yojana:** It provides financial assistance to integrated Bio-ethanol Project using lignocelluloses biomass and other such renewable feedstock. Its aim to creation of an ecosystem for setting up commercial projects and boost to R&D in 2G Ethanol sector.
- 4) **Trifood Scheme:** A joint initiative of ministry of food Processing Industry, Ministry of Tribal Affairs and TRIFED. Under this initiative, a tertiary value addition centre will be set up in Jagdalpur in Chhattisgarh and Raigad in Maharashtra.

These are some important government policy to develop the socio-economic condition of tribes.

Conclusion

With the verity of cultural, dialectical, political and geographical differences of the tribal people it is very sensitive and challenging work for the government to develop this community. The tribes of India are now way forward of development but still they need more push and support from the government. only government are not enough to develop this community the private players are also need to come in the picture, with the help of govt. and private player, both will be able to develop the tribal people.

Suggestions

India is the most growing populated country in the world also India has the largest tribal population in the world. With the huge population of our developing country the challenging part is in the front of our government is to provide the employment to all but apart from this we need to focus or develop the tribes of our country because they are important part of our country they have enormous potential to contribute in our GDP we just need to push them for their development.

Tribes procure most of their raw materials from the forests to produce a variety of products that have significant symbolism to their culture. These products have a huge demand across the world, especially in the South Asian and south East Asian countries as well as in the domestic market too. But the supply of these products is extremely low. The tribes are unaware about the non tribal economy also the non tribal people are unaware about the product of the tribes. So their huge gap economy between tribes and non tribes. This is one of the consequences of inadequate marketing strategies and as a result the community is unable to profit from the products that it produces.

So to full fill the gap between the tribal economy and modern civilized economy we need to

stabilize the connectivity in these two economies. Government need to encourage Corporate Social Responsibility funds towards up scaling of the skills of tribal youths, also need to promote innovation in products and marketing facilities for tribal products by engaging franchises in different cities. To provide some knowledge to the tribes about the market they can able to make profit, also marketing strategies is important for the production of goods. Providing the financial facilities in the tribal area will reduces the exploitation of tribes by the money lenders. It is also important to provide necessary raw materials with easy availability at subsidized rate.

Improvement of this area is possible with the socio-economic development. It helps to upgrade the standard of living of tribal people or also help to improve the tribal economy as well as the country GDP.

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