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Strengthening tribal populace of Chhattisgarh: Obstacles and opportunities

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Abstract

Through social welfare programmes, the state of Chhattisgarh seeks to create revenue, reduce unemployment, and provide socioeconomic circumstances for tribal growth. The welfare system, however, is badly impacted by the variety of problems. The lack of control over resources and assets, lack of education and skills, malnutrition, inadequate access to shelter and clean water, vulnerability, crime and victimisation are just a few reasons why tribals are falling behind. Other reasons include geographic and cultural isolation, inadequate health facilities, and the inability to achieve food security. Their life will be tough to live because of all these difficulties. The government works to help the Tribes through different social programmes in light of these problems. This article examines the socio-economic status of the tribal communities and the government schemes introduced by the Governments of Chhattisgarh to assist the tribals communities.

Keywords: Tribals; Obstacles; Welfare; Victimisation

1. Introduction

The indigenous people of our nation are known as the tribal population. They make up the most vulnerable segment of our society since they live in a natural, sparsely inhabited area distant from civilization and adhere to traditional values, practises, and beliefs. "Any tribe or tribal community, or portion of or group within any tribe or tribal community, as deemed under article 342 are Scheduled Tribes for the purposes of the Constitution," states the Indian Constitution.

According to Article 342 of the Constitution, communities are designated as Scheduled Tribes based on characteristics like primitive traits, geographic isolation, distinct culture, shyness of contact with community at large, and economic backwardness. India's social system is strongly influenced by its tribal community, which makes up the second-highest concentration in the world. India has 104.3 million tribal people, or 8.6% of the country's total population (Census of India, 2011). There are roughly 449 tribes and subtribes in India. The states with the highest percentage of scheduled tribes include Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, and Karnataka. 83 % of the nation's scheduled tribal population resides in these states. 15.3% of all scheduled tribes are found in Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Jammu & Kashmir, Tripura, Mizoram, Bihar, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu. Chhattisgarh is home to a large tribal population, which is diverse in location, origin, socio cultural history, language, livelihood and level of development. As per NSSO (2009- 10) the population of Schedule Tribe in India is 806.49 lakhs in which 68.28 lakhs belongs to Chhattisgarh state, percentagewise it is 10.87 % for India and 38.34% for Chhattisgarh. Hill Korwa, Birhor, Kamar, Baiga, Abhujmaria, and Bharia were the six primitive tribes that comprised in undivided Madhya Pradesh; five of these tribes currently reside in Chhattisgarh, making up more than 80% of the primitive tribes of undivided Madhya Pradesh (Ekka, 2013).

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There are 42 scheduled tribes in Chhattisgarh, according to "The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment) Act, 1976 and as added by Act 28 of 2000."

2. Distribution of primitive tribes in Chhattisgarh

2.1. Gond

The Gond tribe of Bastar is one of the most famed tribes in India, recognized for their exceptional Ghotul system of marriages. The Gond Tribals, who are also acknowledged as the Koytorias are extensively dispersed throughout Chhattisgarh.

2.2. Abuj Maria

The Abhuj Maria tribe is one of the major sub castes of the Gond tribal group. They survive in segregation and dwell in the isolated enclaves of Narayanpur, Bastar. Money and material pleasures rarely entice the people of this race.

2.3. Bison Horn Maria

Bison Horn Maria is one of the well-known tribal groups of India. Mostly found in the Bastar region of Chhattisgarh, they are the chief sub - caste of an ethnic community called Gond.

2.4. Muria

The Murias are one of the countless tribes that dwell in Chhattisgarh. They are the well-known sub caste of the Gonds who lead the populace of Chhattisgarh. The tribesmen of Muria mainly inhabit in the dense forest zones of Kondagon Tehsil and Narayanpur Tehsil of Bastar.

2.5. Halba

The Halba Tribals are extensively discrete all over Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Maharashtra. One of India's principal tribes, the Halba tribals dwells in the districts of Bastar, Raipur and Durg in Chhattisgarh.

2.6. Dhurvaa

The Dhurvaas are perhaps the most noteworthy aboriginal tribe that occupies the abode of Chhattisgarh's Bastar region.

2.7. Kol

Kol is a general name for the Munda, Oraon and Ho Adivasi of Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Tripura, Assam, Nepal and Bangladesh.

2.8. Korba

Korbas are one of the famous scheduled tribes of India. They subsist in forest and hills of Chhotanagpur; the bordering area of Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh.

3. Numerous Challenges Confronted by Chhattisgarhs Tribal Communities

3.1. Naxalism

Today's tribal people are sandwiched between the police and naxals, two opposing lobbies. For the accomplishment of their objectives, naxals actively kill, exploit, and threaten. The tribal members are tortured by cops on the other side. The tribe members were completely disturbed and perplexed as a result. This issue has a variety of origins, consequences, and solutions.

3.2. Poverty

A severe crisis affecting tribal people is poverty. This issue has a number of root causes. Most tribes are below the poverty threshold. It is influenced by a number of circumstances, including illiteracy, poor social and economic conditions, a lack of resources and industry, and primary jobs. Tribal people have been dealing with physical and psychological issues as a result of poverty, starvation, high criminality, and a high death rate.

3.3. Health related issues

Tribal population suffers chronic disease like water and air born, malnutrition, deficiency of iodine and calcium. Tuberculoses, due to alcoholism liver dysfunction, leprosy etc are the common diseases present among the tribal's. Lack of medical facilities and awareness still after 65 years of independence tribal's are using their traditional methods, existing superstitions and old disease remedial practices which hamper on their social and familiar life and destroy the social construction.

3.4. Land Problems

Tribal's totally depend on agriculture and supplementary primary occupations. Tribal's history is full of land alienation and colonialism. Moneylenders Zamindars and traders are exploited to the tribal's in various angles. With the concept of industrialization and urbanization the ratio of forest decline speedily. After that tribal's started to search the jobs at different places like mining, industries and tertiary sectors.

3.5. Educational Problems

Education is very long to tribals. Lack of transport facilities, old mentality, unattraction of administration and government, availability of traditional experience and knowledge etc are the various reasons are responsible for the degraded educational situation. Fears of naxal persons the employees are not ready to go there and perform their duties in remote and tribal communities. Educationally the tribal population is at different levels of development but overall the formal education has made very little impact on tribal groups. Formal education is not considered necessary to discharge their social obligations. Superstitions and myths play an important role in rejecting education.

3.6. Cultural and Religious Problems

Like other culture, in tribal communities also gives place to ethnocentromocisem concept. Interactions with other culture, the tribal's going to spoil to their own culture. Due to influence of Christian missionaries the problem of bilingualism has developed which led to indifference towards tribal language. Unnecessary cultural and religious activities disturb to tribal's and pulls towards ineptness. Therefore suicide cases, tension, stress, familiar disturbance takes place in these communities.

3.7. Women related issues

Like other society, tribal's show the division of labour. The classification of works has been divided between male and female. Generally hard and heavy works done by male and secondary works perform by females. Obisally as per the concept of gender inequality tribal women put on secondary places. Exploitation by husband, excessive load of children, heavy burden and load of work hamper directly to the tribal women.

3.8. Problems of Administration and Government

After independence Government of India has been started various schemes and plans for the upliftment and development of tribal status. But expected success could not get and still there is need of time to frame developmental policies for them. While perusing the study it is noticed that very few officers, employees are interested to give their services in remote tribal region. It has various causes like fear of naxals persons, familiar problems, interior area, transportation problems etc.

3.9. Remedies to overcome these constraints

Different approaches have been put out to solve the tribal issues successfully. Three approaches have been used to the tribal issues. These are :

3.9.1. Assimilation

Assimilation is one of the ways of dealing with the tribal problems. Thus, according to this approach, we cannot deal with tribal problems on the basis of tribal culture and life but by changing them into the frame of new community. According to this solution advocated by the social reformers and voluntary organizations, assisting and encouraging the tribals to assimilate them with the mainstream of national life, can alone permanently solve the tribal problems.

3.9.2. Isolation

Elwin has advocated for maintaining the tribals' segregation from the rest of civilization. Two issues may be resolved by keeping them segregated in select "National Parks" or "reserved areas": The indigenous people would be able to

preserve their unique identities and be exempt from outsider exploitation. The proponents of this strategy believe that the indigenous members need enough time to integrate with the rest of the community. The drawback of this strategy is that once the tribe members are kept apart, they are likely to form entrenched interests and isolate themselves from others permanently.

3.9.3. Integration

The third view, which is actively followed in the recent years, is that of integration. The policy of isolation is neither possible nor desirable, and that of assimilation would mean imposition. Hence integration alone can make available to the tribes the benefits of modern society and yet retain their separate identity. This view recommends the rehabilitation of the tribals on the plains along with the civilized people, but away from their native places such as hills, mountains, forests, etc. This suggestion has also been criticized. It is said that this suggestion has been advocated to further the interests of industrialists and capitalists. This solution is not appreciated on the ground that it may create economic and moral decadence to those who are separated from their beloved land to plains.

4. Tribal welfare schemes in chhattisgarh

4.1. 11-Point programme

The 11-point programme includes: 1. Housing facilities; 2. Drinking water provision; 3. Electrification of villages; 4. Medical check-up; 5. Provision of Food Security; 6. Nutritious food to 0-6 year age-group infants and pregnant women and lactating mothers; 7. Development of skills; 8. Social security; 9. Distribution of Forest Rights Pattas; 10. Distribution of Caste and Domicile certificates; 11. Distribution of blankets, umbrellas and radios for increasing awareness of information level. The 11-point programme would be implemented in mission mode.

4.2. Procurement of minor forest produce at MSP

The fixation of the minimum support price (MSP) for seven kinds of minor forest produce in the tribal-populated areas of Chhattisgarh. The villagers there have begun to reap well-deserved profits of their hard work. This minor forest produce includes sal seeds, harra, tamarind, chiraunji, mahua seed, kusmi lac, and rangini lac. Under this scheme of the Union Tribal Affairs Ministry, procurement of minor forest produce at support price is being done through the Chhattisgarh government's State Minor Forest Produce Marketing and Development Cooperative Union.

4.3. Livelihood College Project

Chhattisgarh is the first state in the country to provide legal right to skill development to its youth of 18-45 age group. For this, the Right to Skill Development Act 2013 has been enacted. Livelihood Colleges have been set up where short-term training courses in various employment-oriented trades are available. This includes automotive repairing, mason, plumber, driver, electrician, fabrication, nursing, computer etc. Training course in stitching and embroidery is also available for women.

4.4. Education City

Under this unique scheme, the state government has established an Education City on an area of 170 acres in Javanga village of South Bastar (Dantewada district) at a cost of Rs 100 crore. In the Education City, children of Naxal violence affected families are provided education facilities from primary school to higher secondary school, along with technical training and technical education. ITI and polytechnic have also been established in the Education City for technical training and education.

4.5. Success stories

4.5.1. Village - Khardhodhi & Junapara

Khardori is a village is situated 15 km from block headquarters Patthalgaoon in Jashpur distt. Forest cover was depleted and the villagers were facing crisis in getting fuel, fodder etc. The women had to go far away to collect fuel wood. The villagers decided in gramsabha to take up afforestation activity on a revenue wasteland. Species they planted – Teak, Khamhar, Shubabool, Bamboo, Jetrophia, Kaju, Eukeliptus, Mango, Karanj, Nashpati, Jackfruit etc. Encouraged with the success of Khardori plantation, villagers of adjoining village Junapara also undertook plantation activity. They planted 21000 plants of different species in revenue wasteland in 2005-06. This plantation is also very successful. The villagers are getting sufficient quantity of fodder in the form of grass from the plantation. The villagers feel very happy and proud of it.

4.5.2. *Sugarcane Cultivation at Natwarnagar*

Natural Village Natwarnagar is 5 km away from block headquarters Kusmi distt. Surguja. The population of the villages is 490. Chhattisgarh Tribal Development Programme entered in the village in the year 2002, since than SHG & other village level committees have been formed. With the help & support of the programme the villagers constructed five km irrigation canal. In want of irrigation facilities, agriculture is mainly rainfed in this area. After construction of the canal the farmers took vegetable cultivation in their Wadi on a massive scale. Encouraged with the initial success of group cultivation, the SHGs decided to take cash crop sugarcane in their field. They took loan worth Rs. 3.5 lacs from Rural Bank, Surguja for lift irrigation and sugarcane cultivation with Kisan Credit Card. The SHGs have been successful in raising sugarcane crops and earning good profit. Now they have also started preparation of jaggery which a value addition to the material. This has given lot of confidence to the local farmers.

5. Conclusion

According to the NSSO (2009–10), there are 806.49 lakh Schedule Tribe people in India, of which 68.28 lakh are from the state of Chhattisgarh; this represents a proportion of 10.87% for India and 38.34% for Chhattisgarh. Hill Korwa is one of the five primordial tribes that still inhabit Chhattisgarh. They live largely in rural areas, mostly in hills and forests. They have a sizable portion of the population that is below the poverty line, has a high infant mortality rate, severe malnutrition, numerous infectious illnesses, lower literacy rates, and develops at an incredibly sluggish rate. To manage growth in their communities, a different policy and administrative framework is required.

Compliance with ethical standards

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