

Socio-Economic Status of Scheduled Tribes in Karnataka

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Abstract

In all parts of the nation, the state's legislative branch has worked hard to improve the lot of tribal people and has had some success. Tribal people's plight is appalling and horrible despite their efforts, and it requires quick attention. Evaluation of the effects of developmental initiatives on the socioeconomic standing of tribal people is therefore vital, which is why the current study was carried out on Scheduled Tribes in Karnataka's Raichur district. This essay explores the idea of scheduled tribes' socioeconomic status in the chosen study area and looks at how development variables affect the tribals' socioeconomic standing.

The study also examines the relationship between the socioeconomic status of the tribal people and development variables, and it makes recommendations for ways to improve their socioeconomic standing in the chosen study area.

Key Words : *Socio-Economic conditions, Scheduled Tribes, Descriptive research.*

Introduction

The vast world we live in has, in a sense, shrunk to a sprawling village without borders due to the exponential advancements in science that humanity has made over the last 150 years or so, compared to what our ancestors did before the symphony of creation had closed full in man. Efficiency, productivity, technique, integration, and affluence are the defining characteristics of this world. Individuals from many countries are fighting hard to achieve socioeconomic advancement. However, the lack of a level playing field renders this conflict extremely unfair and prevents the disadvantaged segments of society from benefiting from the new advantages and options presented by the rapidly evolving global order. As stated in the constitution, our nation's treasured goal is to create an equal social order with equity for all segments of society, free from any kind of discrimination on the basis of religion, race, sex, or place of birth. Therefore, equity for the most vulnerable members of society is the driving force behind the constitutional framework and permeates it. All citizens should have access to social, economic, and political justice, according to the founding fathers of our constitution. They came to see that the poor and weaker segments of society were suffering from deprivation and disadvantages as a result of the unfair forces ingrained in the political and socioeconomic structures. In order for them to integrate into society at large, the numerous protections and safeguards aimed to guarantee their overall development and freedom from social injustice and exploitation. According to Article 46 of the Indian Constitution, "the state shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation and shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and in particular of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes." As a result, the Indian Constitution appropriately acknowledges the issues and goals of the indigenous people. The foundation of the constitution's

social justice framework is the reservation policy. Reservation is intended to empower them and help them integrate into mainstream society by making up for the historical discrimination against them.

By empowering the marginal socioeconomic groups, particularly the tribal people, the global movement to put people at the core of development can advance with more vigour. In contemporary India, the Scheduled Tribes—especially the primitive tribes—are positioned in the most precarious situation. The tribe's long-term seclusion from society at large and the exploitation they endure at the hands of non-tribes are major causes of their backwardness. Especially in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, tribal people who have added to the diversity of our culture and legacy have been marginalised and ignored. In 1951, India began its extensive planned development planning. The "Directive Principles of the State Policy" outlined in the Indian Constitution serve as the foundation for this development planning's goals and societal premises. Our development plans aim to start an all-around balanced growth process that will guarantee a growing national income and a consistent improvement in living conditions. Paradoxically, the backlash against these initiatives led to the displacement of some tribal members, which in turn led to the establishment of planned initiatives for tribal development and appropriate policies for the defence of their rights. The process of social change among them has been sparked by these initiatives. As a result, the current study attempts to characterise the social and economic developments within the framework of the Chenchus, a Primitive Tribe mostly found in Karnataka's Raichur area.

Review of Literature

Madhu Gundlupet (2002:06) [4] remarks: "The tribes also suffer from certain genetic disorders and deficiency diseases specific to tribal areas such as GEPD and sickle cell anemia. Malaria, tuberculosis and sexually transmitted diseases are other areas of concern. The nutrition status of tribes is not satisfactory according to the empirical data. The family planning programmes are also implemented in the tribal areas to certain extent. The brunt of family planning is borne by women, possibly because they have a higher stake in not becoming pregnant frequently and because men are not prepared to take equal responsibility for birth control, or possibly, because healthcare providers find it easier to target women". The tribal environment is also known for unsanitary environment which contributes to the proliferation of disease, leading to high morbidity rates, which reduces productivity and affects the earning capacity of individuals. The poor sanitary condition of ST households is highlighted by the Census Reports. The taps are the primary sources of drinking water for the tribes. Navada (2004:11) reports: "The percentage of permanent houses for tribes is less than 40.0% according to the latest data. A higher percentage of rural STs live in semipermanent houses (43.4) than urban STs (23.1) who live predominantly in permanent houses (66.9). The electrical connectivity is fairly high among ST households. According to the 2011 Census, about 70.0% of ST households in Karnataka had electricity as a source of lighting, compared with 78.5 per cent for all households and 68.5 per cent for SC households. In rural areas, STs depended on electricity (60.3 per cent) as well as kerosene (38.8), whereas urban ST households relied principally on electricity (80.6 per cent)". These high levels of connectivity indicate that state policies to provide electrical connections to ST households have paid off handsomely

Chandrashekar (2004:02) observes: “The Tribal Sub-Plan was first introduced in 1976-77 when it was implemented in the Integrated Tribal Development Project (ITDP) in the districts of Mysore, Chikmagalur, Kodagu and Dakshina Kannada (including Udupi). In 1992, it was extended to all districts in the state. The objectives of the TSP are poverty alleviation, protection of tribal culture, education, healthcare and providing basic minimum infrastructure. Poverty alleviation includes programmes in agriculture, animal husbandry, sericulture, horticulture, village and small industries as well as all employment-generating schemes such as Swarna Jayanthi Swarozgar Yojana (SJSY)”. According to the Human Development Report (2005), programmes like free housing, drinking water supply, electrical connectivity, ashram schools, scholarships, free text books and uniforms, midday meals and poverty reduction programmes have benefited the tribes who had experienced serious economic constraints. Studies have reported that the tribal development programmes have not significantly enhanced the educational, health and economic status of tribes despite these initiatives. The magnitude of the problem is so great that a large percentage of Scheduled Tribe families is still poor and lacks access to resources that would improve their education and health status. The human development status of the Scheduled Tribes is more than a decade behind the rest of the population of the state and they are the poorest and most deprived of all sub-populations in the state. According to Mariswamy (2006:10) [7], the Department of Tribal Welfare earmarks three per cent of their plan budget for expenditure on tribal development in the state. The TSP funds were first pooled in 1991. In ‘pooling’, funds earmarked under TSP are partially or completely withdrawn from the department. The resultant corpus is then utilized to finance three strategic areas: housing, education (construction of hostels) and financing irrigation wells and pump sets under the Ganga Kalyan scheme. Suresh (2008:14) notes: “Most of the tribal areas of Karnataka state are deprived of basic health care facilities. The tribes also suffer from food insecurity, ill-health and malnutrition due to poverty and unemployment problems. The crude death rate (CDR) is estimated at 8.50 which is again higher than 7.50 for the general population. The CDR is lower for STs than SCs (9.12) in the state. Most of the health indicators show deterioration in the health of women and children. The health status of the tribal population is not on par with the rest of the state’s population. The infant mortality rate (IMR) of STs (64.37) is much higher than the state average (52.0); the IMR for STs is marginally lower than the IMR for SCs (64.74) and there is a marked difference between male (75.84) and female IMR (54.48)”. Sambasiva Rao and Subrahmanyam (2007) observes that over the last few years the Self Help Groups becomes the best intermediary to move ahead towards tribal people participation and tribal women empowerment. Shinde (2012) laments: “Their literacy rate is the lowest for all social groups and female literacy, which is a low 36.6 per cent when compared with the state average of 56.9, places ST women far behind a population that is, itself, disadvantaged to start with. There are disparities between ST students and others at every level and along all indicators of educational attainment: enrolment and retention in primary education and subsequent participation in secondary and tertiary education. One bright feature is the fact that girls perform well scholastically once they clear the hurdles to the deceptively simple acts of first enrolling and secondly, being allowed to stay on in school”.

Directorate of Tribal Development amplifies

Programs in agriculture, animal husbandry, sericulture, horticulture, village and small industries, as well as all employment-generating initiatives like the Swarna Jayanthi Swarozgar Yojana (SJSY), are all included in the effort to reduce poverty. Departments set aside 3% of their plan budget for spending on tribal development, pooling TSP monies under the TSP. Nevertheless, similar to the Special Component Plan for Scheduled Castes, several departmental initiatives were merely token gestures towards the advancement of STs and were neither especially pertinent nor successful. In 1991, the TSP funds were initially combined. Following that, the corpus is used to fund three key areas: housing, education (building dorms), and funding irrigation wells and pump sets as part of the Ganga Kalyan program. In their analysis of the function of self-help groups in tribal development, Mahantesh and Sedan (2014) [6] claimed that these organisations have fundamentally altered rural microcredit institutions. Subsistence farmers and tribal people, who make up a significant portion of the rural agricultural workforce, have a hard time getting credit from banks and stand to gain from the SHG concept.

In addition to encouraging members to save and microfinance, self-help groups also aim to promote gender equity and social empowerment. Tribal community-based organisations have also had a limited impact on community education, organisation, involvement, and action for tribal development in the state, claim Anjanayya and Sreeramulu (2014:01) [1]. By working with the local community, which is more aware of its own socioeconomic requirements, customs, and culture than nontribals, development initiatives can be made more durable and effective. Their involvement in government-and nonprofit-funded programs encourages people to use the services provided and provide input for program reorientation and change.

Objectives of the Study

1. To investigate the socioeconomic circumstances of the designated research area's scheduled tribes.
2. To assess how the socioeconomic circumstances of the tribal people in the chosen research region relate to the development factors.
3. To propose recommendations on how to improve the socioeconomic circumstances of the tribal people in the chosen research area.

Hypotheses

The following alternative hypotheses were developed and examined in light of the aforementioned goals.

H1: Tribes' socioeconomic circumstances are significantly impacted by higher educational attainment.

H2: The socioeconomic circumstances of the tribes are significantly impacted by higher income levels.

ANOVA and Pearson Correlation Analysis were the tests employed.

Research Methodology

The research design used in this study was descriptive and analytical. The research analysis was carried out using both primary and secondary data. Selective random sampling was used to gather primary data, and a structured questionnaire was used to aid collect data through the interview schedule method. The study's sample size was 150 people from the tribal mandals in Karnataka's Raichur District, 75 of whom were male and 75 of whom were female. A 5-point Likert scale was employed to gauge respondents' thoughts, and statistical methods such as the ANOVA test and Pearson Correlation analysis were utilised to see whether the suggested hypotheses were statistically significant.

Conclusion

In order to delve deeper into the tangible components of tribe members' socioeconomic circumstances, the study ends by identifying the confirmed facets of tribal development. Tribals' socioeconomic beliefs and educational attainment are somewhat correlated, and their income levels have a big influence on their financial security and related facets of their family lives. In terms of social emancipation and economic empowerment, employment generating programs are affecting indigenous people's socioeconomic circumstances in two ways. The tribal development initiatives push the economic growth of the tribal society as a whole after promoting the tribals' cultural advancement, social welfare, and security.

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