



IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON MINOR FOREST PRODUCE AND SCHEHDULE TRIBES ECONOMY OF MADHYA PRADESH

Dr. Sushama Yadav¹, Ms. Anjna Uikey²

¹Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Dr. Harisingh Gaur Vishwavidyalay, M.P.

²Research Scholar, Department of Commerce, Dr. Harisingh Gour Vishwavidyalay, M.P.

ABSTRACT

According to the 2011 census, tribes in India constitute 8.6 percent of the total population, whereas the population of tribes in Madhya Pradesh is 21.10%. There was devastation in the economic system of the Scheduled Tribes during the COVID-19 pandemic. People belonging to these communities mainly depend on the collection and selling of Agricultural or Minor Forest Produces as raw material for their livelihood. Due to lockdown, the business cycle was also stopped, as a result of which the living of the forest dwellers was in very bad condition. The Tribes have a means of livelihood apart from agriculture and minor forest production. They go to the cities for employment and work as laborers. Generally, the very poor and landless families of society, especially women, are involved in the collection of non-castle forest produce. Thus, the families of these landless and deprived sections of society depend on the collection of non-wood forest produce not only for employment but also for food security. Therefore, there is a need to organize the management of non-timber forest products to strengthen the livelihoods of the families suffering from extreme poverty. The Effective management of non-timber forest produce will not only help in alleviating the poverty of the poorest and disadvantaged communities but also help the local communities with conservation of forests. Desired cooperation will be receive by giving priority to the production of non-timber forest products in the objectives of forest management, better results can be achieved in achieving the national and local objectives set for forest conservation.

Keywords- Covid-19, Tribes Economy, Minor forest produce, SDGs

INTRODUCTION

The Scheduled Tribes' economy is mainly centered around the collection and processing of minor forest products and cultivation for the purpose of domestic use. Due to the lack of an economic system, some villagers and forest dwellers work in cities. The outbreak of COVID-19 affected the whole world. But India, as a developing economy, does not have adequate resources to overcome the situation. The health facility was not that good, nor was there any medicine for COVID-19. As with day-by-day increasing cases of COVID patients, the Central Government of India took preventive measures against COVID-19 and declared a nationwide "lockdown" on the evening of March 24, 2020, limiting the movement of the population so it could be stopped from spreading. The number of cases of COVID-19 was increasing continuously. Due to the lockdown, sales were halted and had a

lot of economic impact, as a result of which the livelihood of tribal people and other backward-class communities was snatched away and suffer a lot.

COVID-19 has affected not only the population of Madhya Pradesh but the population of the whole of India. In Madhya Pradesh, scheduled tribes are already backward and come below the poverty line. As we have seen in COVID-19, not only the rural community but the economy of the people of the cities too. All the rural dwellers, the forest dwellers, and the people of the city were ordered to stay in their respective homes. And there was also prevention of contact with each other.

The COVID-19 pandemic has proved to be very dangerous all over the world. It is a deadly epidemic. There were very few ways to avoid it. That's why the government of India has passed an order to follow the lockdown and social distance. In today's time, there is no report of the complete elimination of the TURE virus.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- Dr. Harshit Dwivedi and Dr. Ganesh Singh Rathore (2020) state in their book studying the utility of Madhya Pradesh's minor forest products that important woody species are found in the state's minor forests. Like Amla, Tendu leaves, Sal seed storage, Chironji, Lac collection, Mahua, Boss, how are all these species socially useful and how is the production collected from them? And it has also been said in the study that production, collection, and trade of these trees can be done by anyone. The forest is our natural resource as well as a means of livelihood. Important highlights have been thrown into the production obtained from forests.
- Dr. G. S. Mishra, Dr. Dharmendra Verma and Ch. Muralikrishna (2018) in their study of the major gum production and storage areas of Madhya Pradesh explained how gum is produced and stored. And in which areas can gum be produced? They said that the production of gum is a new guide for the villagers dependent on forests. The livelihood of the villagers is affected. The method of production of gum is described. so that the production of gum can be increased. and helps in socio-economic improvement. Decentralization is inherent in this study to make society meaningful and welfare-oriented.
- Dr. Pratibha Bhattanagar (2020) in her quarterly magazine, has written about the production, storage, and utility of Giloy in the quarterly magazine related to the trade of herbs and minor forest produce of Central India. Giloy (*Tinospora cardifolia*) (also known as bunch) is a perennial vine. Its leaves are like betel leaves known by many names in Ayurveda. There is a lack of information about the business of Giloy in the rural areas.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To analyze COVID-19 impacts on Minor Forest Produce
- To analyze COVID-19 impacts on Economy of Schedule Tribes
- To determine the role of minor forest products on schedule tribes

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Due to the conceptual and review character of the research study, an exploratory research strategy was used and variety of secondary data that were accessed through secondary sources. Eminent authors' research reports, books, journal articles, government reports and websites have been examined.

SCHEDULED TRIBES OF MADHYA PRADESH

Madhya Pradesh was formed as a state in India on November 2, 1956. Madhya Pradesh, located in the heart of India, is known for its abundance of natural resources, special forests, and diversity of wild animals. According to the final figures according to the 2011 census, out of the total population of 7.27 crore, 5.25 crore reside in rural areas and 2 crore reside in urban areas.

The abode of scheduled tribes and other wild tribes is situated between 21.6° and 26.30° north latitude and 14.9° to 82.48° east longitude in the state of Madhya Pradesh. In terms of percentage, 72.37% of the population in the

state lives in rural areas and 27.63% of the population resides in cities. The Scheduled Caste (SC) population in the state is 15.6% of the total population of Madhya Pradesh, and the Scheduled Tribe (ST) population is 21.1%.

Madhya Pradesh India has 46 recognized Scheduled Tribes, of which three have been identified as Particularly Backward Tribal Community (PTG) (formerly known as Special Primitive Community). Surrounded by the Narmada River in the north and the Godavari River in the south-east, the tribal people occupy the hill slopes of the region.

The term "Schedule Tribe" refers to the identity of specific indigenous communities. Their condition has been accepted by the Constitution of India. Due to the diversity of tribes throughout the state of Madhya Pradesh, due to different living styles, social structures, economic structures, different languages, heredity, religious beliefs, and geographical environment, the diverse tribal world of Madhya Pradesh did not develop.

In terms of major tribal population, Madhya Pradesh state ranks first among all Indian states and union territories, and Scheduled Tribes rank 12th in terms of total population.

The primitive castes listed in Article 242(1) of the Constitution are called Scheduled Tribes. Scheduled Tribes have been defined in Article 366 (Clause 25) of the Constitution.

Recognized tribes in Madhya Pradesh-

❖ Agaria 2.Bega, Bhil Meena, Gondi, Bhunjia, Biar, Biyar, Dhanwari etc.

Around there are 46 tribes, not all tribes fall under the Scheduled Tribes. These are the tribes that are very backward. Such tribes have been kept in the category of Scheduled Tribes. Such tribes live in the mountains, around the river and in the forests where amenities are scarce, because these tribes have been classified as Scheduled Tribes; more attention is required to develop them. These tribes are very backward in education, health, and business, too. Such villages also exist in Madhya Pradesh, where there is no good system of education. Many types of schemes are run by the government (state and central government) to promote education. But due to a lack of information, the scheduled tribe communities are not able to get the benefits of these schemes.

MINOR FOREST PRODUCE LIVELIHOOD OF TRIBAL TRIBES

Minor forest products are obtained from the forest, which is collected as raw material by the people of forest dwellers and villagers. The products obtained from forests have been classified under "Minor Forest Produce". In general, fruits, flowers, bark, gum tuber root, herbaceous plants, leaves, etc. are kept in the category of minor forest produce. Major minor forest products in the region of Madhya Pradesh are as follows: Mahua, Mahua Fruit, Pickle (Chironji) Amla, Bhilma, Tamarind, Retanjot, Harra, Vaividang, Kusum seed, Baheda, Kusum Full Bal' Harra, baheda Lad, Lac, Chirota, Benchadi, Chiraita Kaunch, Kadu Cumin Malkangni, etc. Any person can collect minor forest produce and can do business of minor forest produce.

Scheduled tribes live in large numbers around the forests of the state, and some tribes also live inside the forest. These tribes collect raw materials from the forests for livelihood. A large part of the tribal and other rural people are dependent on the forests, so the main responsibility of the forest department is to manage the forests in such a way that the villagers have a source of livelihood from the forests. But their participation in management should also be strengthened, and the forest as a natural heritage continues to develop as a sustainable protected and related resource.

According to a study conducted by the Planning Commission of the Government of India, minor forest produce accounts for 20-40% of total forest income. The collection of minor forest produce even in the event of famine is an important part of the livelihood strategy of the forest dwellers, with the tribal population living in and around

the forest areas. The percentage of families living below the poverty line in these families living in remote villages near forest areas is higher than in other villages. The percentage of poverty in Scheduled Tribe families is higher in comparison to other social groups. Generally, the very poor and landless families of society, especially the women, are involved in the small collection of forest products. Thus, the families of these landless and deprived sections of society depend on the collection of minor forest products not only for employment but also for food security. Hence the need to organize the management of minor forest products to secure the livelihood of the families suffering from extreme poverty they wanted. Efficient management of non-timber forest produce will not only help in alleviating the poverty of the poorest and marginalized communities but will also get the cooperation of the local communities in the conservation of forests. By giving priority to the production of non-timber forest products in the objectives of forest management, better results can be achieved in achieving the national and local objectives for forest conservation. Therefore, it is necessary to ensure the role of forests in the livelihood of local communities for the long-term conservation of forests. In this way, the management of minor forest products can be done together in a coordinated manner.

Policy Environment:

1. MP Under the Panchayat Raj and Village Panchayat Act 2001, the right of management, collection and marketing of minor forest produce has been entrusted to the Gram Sabha
2. MP Under the Forest Produce (Protection of Biodiversity and Sustainable Harvesting) Rules 2005, to ensure sustainable management of the forest produce to be collected from the forest areas.
3. MP Under the Forest Produce (Regulation of Trade) Act 1969, provision has been made to regulate trade by notifying forest produce as specified forest produce, with a view to benefiting the local communities through better management. There is a state monopoly on the trade of gum and Sal seed.
4. The Madhya Pradesh Tendu Leaves (Regulation of Trade) Act, 1964, is the most important of the non-woody forest products to be collected. Through this Act, provisions have been made to regulate the trade in tendu leaves and to establish a monopoly of the state through trade.
5. Under the provisions of the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act 2006, not only minor forest products have been redefined, bamboo has also been included in it, and local communities have been empowered for collection and management.

ECONOMY OF TRIBLE TRIBES BEFORE COVID-19

The economy of Scheduled Tribes is different from the economy of developing societies. Some tribes have been kept in the category of Scheduled Tribes because such tribes are very backward. So the economy of these tribes is not very good. The tribal communities mainly do farming because their economic status depends on the forest. They stay in cities to earn wages, work in companies or industries, or do small jobs. The people of the tribal community are very hard-working. Most people like to live in their village and in hilly areas. Their needs are also limited. The first priority is the arrangement of food. Like it has been said, bread, cloth, and houses are the necessities of life. To make a living, the grains obtained from agriculture are stored and kept. And if money is needed, some grains are sold to the retailer. The raw material collected from the forests is dried in the sun and sold to the village hat market and retailer. Different districts of Madhya Pradesh have different economic systems. Like in some places, where there is more production of bamboo, bamboo toys and other things are made.

Talking about the economic system, Madhya Pradesh is a state full of forest wealth, so more tribes in this state depend on forests. and collect and sell forest produce independently. But there is no certainty when their system will break down. The people of this community are unable to make deposits for the future. If the temperature of the season is rained on in the right amount, then there is no loss in agriculture. And the raw material is also

obtained in the right quantity from the forests. Due to bad weather, there is a lot of loss in crops and forest produce. In such a situation, the economic condition of these tribes gets in trouble. In the case of loss due to weather, the farmers are provided assistance by the government.

IMPACT OF COVID-19 SCHEDULED TRIBES ECONOMY

Tushar Das, an independent researcher who worked on the report, told News click that some of the concerns addressed in the report concerned the lack of institutional mechanisms to address the loss of livelihoods from minor forest products (MAPs) by tribal's and forest dwellers. Changes were made in tribal rights and environmental policies. There was a ban on going to the forests in the form of groups. Minor forest produce is collected and sold from March-May-June at the same time due to the lockdown due to the fear of the Corona virus. A large quantity of forest produce was not collected, and whatever was collected was banned from the hat market to sell, and the movement of the retailer into the village was banned.

The income from the collection and sale of minor forest produce is the annual income of the Scheduled Tribes of Madhya Pradesh. The epidemic (a health crisis caused by COVID-19) had a significant impact on Indian society. Due to the lockdown imposed to prevent the outbreak of COVID-19, the poor society and the communities living near the forest had to suffer severely. The minor forest product (MFP), the biggest source of annual income for tribal communities, The collection and sale were affected by the lockdown imposed in the years 2020 and 2021. Most of the MFP collection and trading is done in the period of four months between March and June. Because of the pandemic's unprecedented circumstances, the tribal's of the states were left unsold with their material. A Joint Strategy was prepared under the revised MSP for MFP Guidelines by the Ministry on May 1st, 2020 The Ministry had recommended the addition of 23 new products under MSP to the MSP list.

The new items include forest produce organized by tribes and items from agriculture, horticulture, and government officials in 2020 reports acknowledged that MFP trade was undoubtedly 30%–40% lower than the previous year. We saw in some reports how it became difficult for tribal communities to collect MFPs and wages were also stopped for it. Horticulture products and forest produce could not be sold due to extreme poverty. There was no way to provide further financial assistance to the communities. People living in poverty are facing the problem of hunger in poverty.

ROLE OF FOREST IN ACHIEVING SDGs

The issue is the role of different geographical forests. That minor forest product is important for survival. Goal 1, "No Poverty": Put an end to poverty. Minor forest products have an important place in the forest. Many people from the communities of extreme poverty get 40% of their income from the forests. Many types of raw materials and medicines are obtained . SDG-2 "Zero Hunger" Wild fruits and edible tubers are also obtained from the forest, which is widely used in backward areas. SDG 3, "Good Health and Wellness" Forest Medicine. SDG-6, "Clean Water and Sanitation," by providing drinking water and irrigation water.

CONCLUSION & SUGGESTION

Our farmers have had a difficult year since they have not only had to contend with unpredictable weather patterns, disrupted supply lines due to escalating stagflation, and problems from lockdowns related to the COVID-19 outbreak. It has a tremendous impact on the rural population's means of subsistence. At this point, the government is taking the initiative to revive the rural economy; however, agriculture and related industries now have more expectations and responsibilities for boosting our nation's economy. The awareness campaign should be run for government schemes and policy for rural tribes. As they no longer have to rely on private money lenders and agents, farmers will benefit from the significant agricultural reforms the government has implemented, providing better and more equitable prices for their produce. The Local government need to setup training centers and new holistic techniques should be adopted for development of rural schedule tribes.

References

1. Dr. R. (2021). Migration and Covid-19 economy crises on indigeneouspeoples:Inceptive journey to tribal discontent. *Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Science*, 9(8).
2. Goswami, B., Mandal, R., & Nath, H. K. (2021). Covid-19 pandemic and economic performances of the states in India. *Economic Analysis and Policy*, 69, 461–479. & Mir, N. (2021). *IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON LIVELIHOOD: A REVIEW Covid-19 View project Shredding-Composting-Vermicomposting Machine RURAL View project*. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/348634337>
3. Prof.P.Manjushree, &P.Geeta. (2021). COVID -19: Incessant lockdowns impact on tribal community in India. *EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR)*, 613–619. <https://doi.org/10.36713/epra7863>
4. Tripathy, S. (n.d.). *Chapter-11 Effect of COVID-19 Pandemic on Livelihood system of Bhil Tribe of Bajna block at Ratlam District of Madhya Pradesh, India Saswatik Tripathy Post Graduate Diploma in Development Management*. <https://ssrn.com/abstract=385124>

Websites

currentgkindia.com/madhya-pradesh-janganana-2011/.

5. <https://www.cambridgescholars.com/product/978-1-5275-1308-2>.
6. https://mpforest.gov.in/HO_Outer/Intro H.aspx
7. <https://www.gyanipandit.com /Madhya-Pradesh-history-i>
8. <https://www.mpgkpdf.com/2020/05/anusuchit-janjatiyan-mp--st-in-mp.html>
9. <https://nformation/>
10. https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tribals_in_Madhya_Pradesh
11. <https://www.newsclick.in/COVID-19-lockdown-threatening-livelihoods-tribal-communitiesforest-dwellers-report>
12. <https://www.freejankari.com/2022/06/anusuchit-janjati.html?m=1>
13. <https://tribal.10.https://jaane.in/janjati nic.in/covid19.asp>
14. <https://thewire.in/government/coronavirus-lockdown-tribals-forest-produce>
15. <https://www.newsclick.in/COVID-19-worsened-already-precarious-condition-MFP-collectors-MP>
16. https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/COVID-19_pandemic_in_Madhya_Pradesh
17. <https://sdg.iisd.org/news/special-forests-issue-focuses-on-role-of-forests-in-achieving-sdg>