



LIVING CONDITIONS OF TRIBES IN SINGARENI COLLIERIES REGION-A STUDY

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Abstract

The Population of tribal communities is 10.43 crore as per 2011 census and account for 8.6 percent of the total population in India. Tribals have been spread across all the states and union territories except Punjab, Haryana, Delhi and the union territories of Pondicherry and Chandigarh. They inhabit mainly forests and hill slopes which have plenty of natural resources. About 94 percent of the forest dwellers are tribals and they depend mostly on forests for their living. Tribals have been isolated and untouched by the main stream population for centuries. Due to their Socio-Economic and cultural features and inability to integrate into the general population they continue to remain backward socially and economically.

Key words: *Tribal, Schedule caste, Lambada, koya.*

Introduction

The main features of the tribal economy include importance of agriculture, limited modern technology, Podu cultivation, collective living, production for self consumption, improper division of labour, stagnant socio-economic system, traditions and customs and the like.

The government has introduced different programmes for the welfare of the tribals since independence. Constitutional guarantees, legislative measures and welfare programmes have been initiated to uplift the tribals. Ministry of tribal affairs prepared a strategic plan for inclusion in the 12th five year plan (2012-17) to further improve the conditions of the tribals. All the stake holders in Tribal Development are involved through the National Tribal Policy.

However, constitutional safe-guards, Tribal Sub-Plans, Vana Samrakshana Samithis, Provision of AAY Cards and other measures have not yielded the expected results. No doubt, some sections of the tribals with education and proximity to urban centres have reaped the benefits while others lag behind. The basic weakness of the tribal development programmes is the exclusion of the tribals in both designing and implementation and they have been at the cost of tribal interests.

Review of Earlier Studies

Reddy, B. Krishna and Reddy, M.Ramachandra (1991) found that the more affluent sections of the tribals like Sugali were benefitted by the welfare programmes of the Govt. and Poorer sections were left behind. The authors state that this situation would disintegrate the tribals as a community. The poorer sections need special focus in getting the benefits as per the study corruptions and rigidity in the procedures need to be checked to promote the welfare of the lag behind communities. Lack of education, limited contact with the outside world and ignorance make the tribals depend on leaders some of whom exploit them. The study maintains that the development programmes have an impact on the life styles of the Sugalis both developed and backward groups. The study suggests that the Sugalis be motivated to conserve non-conventional sources of energy, Social and Commercial forestry.

Bapuji, M and Pandit J.V.K.V (1977) pointed out the sufferings of the tribals for centuries through negligence. It is only after independence the government has been promoting their welfare to a little extent. The authors have analysed the conditions of tribal people of the coastal Srikakulam district of the erstwhile Andhra Pradesh. In conclusion it is suggested to stream line the administration to benefit the tribal people from the Government Programmes.



Hanumatha Rayappa and Grover Deepak (1979) point out the rural concentration, illiteracy, economic backwardness and social isolation are prominent among the scheduled tribes and scheduled castes. These groups are not integrated with the rest of the economy and remain poor. Asset base of these two marginalised groups is also low and they constitute the poverty matrix. The study concludes that careful analysis of data on SCs and STs is essential for planning the welfare programmes. It is also recommended that detailed inquiries are necessary to identify the backward tribe groups for remedial action.

Suryanarayana, C (1983) opines that meagre employment opportunities keep the tribals in poverty. Tribal groups have employment in agriculture for 3 to 4 months and they remain without any gainful employment during the rest of the year. They eke out their living through collection of Minor Forest Produce (M.F.P), fishing hunting and the like. Area Development Approach of the government of India has been in the right direction. However, the study reveals that the development process needs to be hastened. The authors state that enhanced economic activities in the tribal areas would improve job opportunities to the tribal labour force with which their incomes are bound to increase.

Narasimha Rao, P et al (2011) have elicited the problems of the tribals in availing the schemes meant for their welfare. Though 89 percent of the sample respondents had not mentioned any problems the remaining percent mentioned different problems. Delay in sending applications, rules and regulations, bribes at lower level, attitudes of the bankers and government officials, illiteracy of the beneficiaries, losing wage while moving for the schemes are the major problems, the tribals encounter.

Raja Rathnam, B (2005) states that tribal development has become a challenge to the governments and stakeholders all over the world. Even after five decades of planning tribals in India have remained poor and backward. Various development programmes launched by the government have benefitted a few among the tribals and credit crunch haunts the tribals even though rural credit institutions have been operating in the tribal areas. Indebtedness and accumulating interest payments have become a burden on the tribals.

Ramaia, P (1981) has examined the problems of the tribals with regard to agriculture, forestry, poverty and indebtedness. Policy of isolation, policy of assimilation and policy of middle path pursued by the Indian government are reviewed in the study. He suggests a new approach for the integrated development of the tribals without disturbing the tribal culture.

Lal. S.L et al have observed that there are variations among the tribes and also among the farm owners of the tribal societies. These variations lead to inequalities within the tribe in income and employment. Small farmers and landless tribals lag behind the large farmers. Gond tribe lags behind Korku tribe in incomes and employment. Crop enterprises are to be integrated with other related enterprises to increase the employment and incomes of the lagging as per the study.

Seema Purushottamam (2005) states that land alienation, soil degradation, wild animal attacks and declining access to forest resources have negatively affected the livelihood base of the tribal community. The author has made cost – benefit analysis and suggested crops to be grown in the tribal areas. Tribal farmers are to be provided the inputs and technology since they are willing to accept the change.

The state of Telangana as the 29 state in India came into existence on 2nd June 2014. It has the largest concentration of ST population 32, 37,492 accounting 9.3 percent of overall population. The districts of Khammam, Warangal, Adilabad and parts of Mahabubnagar district are the scheduled areas where tribal concentration is more. Khammam district has 7,65,565 S.T Population which accounts for 27.4 percent of the population of the district. It has been chosen as the district for the study.

In the background elaborated so far this study attempts to evaluate the living conditions of the tribals who are in Singareni collieries region. Both the sample tribes shall be compared to assess their relative positions.



Objectives

1. To analyse the Socio-Economic and living conditions of the tribals in collieries region.
2. To review the income earning and employment patterns of the sample households.
3. To assess the impact of the Development Programmes on the sample households.
4. To compare the relative positions of the Lambada and Koya tribes who are living around singareni collieries region.
5. To examine the impact of the implementation of government programs.
6. To suggest strategies and policy measures to promote the welfare of the tribals.

Hypotheses

1. Socio-Economic and living conditions of the tribals are slowly undergoing progressive changes.
2. Tribal groups differ in socio-economic and over all development.
3. Government Programms like ITDA and MGNREGA have improved the economic conditions of the tribal.

Methodology

Sample Design

The study takes place in Khammam district which has the largest concentration of tribal population (27.4 percent) among the districts of the Telangana state. Koya and Lambada tribes are dominant in the district of singareni collieries region. Multi-stage sampling technique shall be adopted for sample design. In the first stage 4 mandals shall be selected from out of the scheduled mandals. Two of the mandals shall be Koya dominated while the other two shall be Lambada dominated. In the second stage 3 villages shall be selected randomly from each mandal. In the third stage 30 households shall be selected from each villages. Thus the sample comprises 4 mandals, 12 villages and 360 respondents.

Scope of the Study

The present study evaluates the government programmes on the living conditions of the respondents. The analysis is related to a point of time i.e the time of data collection. The two dominant tribes Koya and Lambada shall be analysed as to the levels of development in a comparative mould

Tools of Analysis: Simple averages and percentages are used. Graphs shall also be used to present the analysis precisely.

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