



**TRIBAL WELFARE PROGRAMMES AND POLICIES IN INDIA:
AN OVERVIEW**

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RESEARCH GUIDE

ABSTRACT

India has the largest concentration of tribal people anywhere in the world except perhaps in Africa. The tribes are the children of nature and their lifestyle is conditioned by the ecosystem. India with a variety of ecosystems presents a varied tribal population throughout its length and breadth. The areas inhabited by the tribal constitute a significant part of the under developed areas of the country. Tribal population lives mostly in isolated villages or hamlets. A smaller portion of their population has now settled in permanent villages as well as in towns and cities. On the whole, as per rough estimates, the prominent tribal areas constitute about 15 percent of the total geographical area of the country. Scheduled Tribes, Schedules Castes and de-notified tribes constitute the weakest section of India's population. Tribal communities interacted with the non-tribal, caste Hindu communities but largely remained separate from the social structure.

KEYWORDS

Adivasi, Schedules Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Tribal Population, Constitution

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Introduction

Adivasi is a generic term for a heterogeneous set of ethnic and tribal groups believed to be the aboriginal population, a substantial indigenous minority, of India. *Adivasi* carries the specific meaning being the original and aboriginal inhabitants of a given region, and was specifically coined for that purpose in the 1930s. Over a period of time, unlike the terms "aborigines" or "tribes", the word "*Adivasi*" has also developed a connotation of past autonomy which was disrupted during the British colonial period in India and which has not been restored. It should also be noted that in North-east India, the term *Adivasi* applies only to the 'Teatribes' imported from Central India during colonial times, while all tribal groups refer collectively to themselves by using the English word "tribes".

Tribal societies are particularly present in the Indian states of Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Karnataka, Tamilnadu, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, north-eastern states, and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. They are officially recognized by the Indian government as the "Scheduled Tribes" in the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution of India.

Objectives

1. To analyse the demographic status of tribal population in India
2. To identify the constitutional provisions for tribal communities in India
3. To find out important tribal welfare programmes in India

Methodology

The study mainly relies on Secondary data. The main sources of secondary data includes the Census of Govt of India, National Sample Survey Report, Report of Tribal Development Department, News Papers, Working Papers, through respected journals, Books, Internet, Periodicals etc..

Demographic Profile of Tribes in India

India has the largest concentration of tribal population anywhere in the world except perhaps in Africa. Scheduled Tribes in India are broadly composed of 250 tribal groups speaking about 105 languages and 225 dialects. The tribal population of the country, as per 2011 census, is 10.43 crore, constituting 8.6% of the total population. 89.97% of them live in rural areas and 10.03% in urban areas. The decadal population growth of the tribal population from Census 2001 to 2011 has been 23.66% against the 17.69% of the entire population. The sex

ratio for the overall population is 940 females per 1000 males and that of Scheduled Tribes 990 females per thousand males.

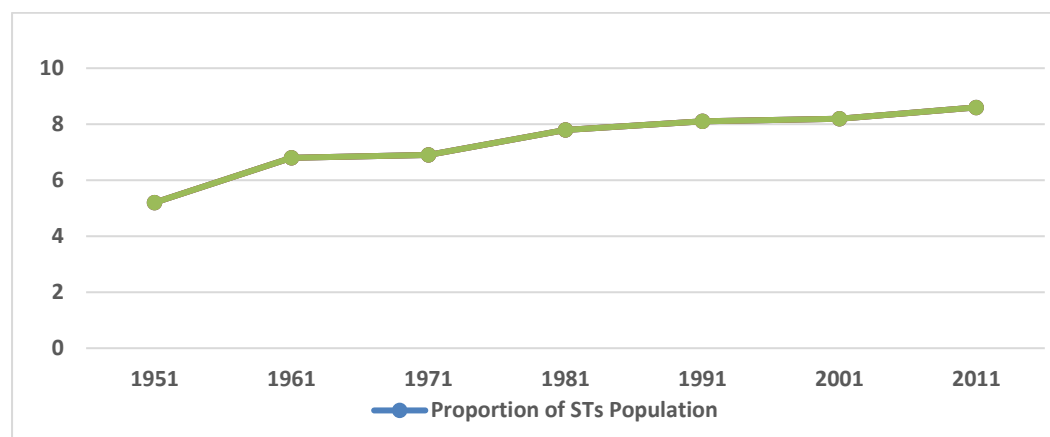
Table 1: Trends in Proportion of Scheduled Tribe Population

Census Year	Total population (in millions)	Scheduled Tribes (ST) Population (in millions)	Proportion of STs population
1951	361.1	19.1	5.2
1961	439.2	30.1	6.8
1971	547.9	38.0	6.9
1981	665.3	51.6	7.8
1991	838.6	67.8	8.1
2001	1028.6	84.3	8.2
2011	1210.8	104.3	8.6

Source: Census Data of India, Gol, Ministry of Tribal Affairs

The trend in ST population since Census 1951 is illustrated in Table 1. From 19.1million in 1961, the ST population has increased to 104.3 million in 2011.

Figure 1: Proportion of Scheduled Tribe Population



Source: Census Data of India, Gol, Ministry of Tribal Affairs

The fig.1 reveals that the trend in ST population since Census 1951. From 5.2 % in 1951, the ST population has increased to 8.6 % in 2011.

Table 2: Comparison of Population of Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and All Categories(In Crores)

Type	Scheduled Caste	Scheduled Tribe	All Categories

	2001	2011	2001	2011	2001	2011
Male	8.6	10.3	4.3	5.2	53.2	62.3
Female	8.1	9.8	4.2	5.1	49.6	58.7
All India	16.7	20.1	8.4	10.4	102.9	121.1

Source: Census 2001 & Census 2011

Table 2 shows a comparative picture of the populations of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and All Categories for Male, Female and Total for Census Years 2001 and 2011. As per 2011 Census Scheduled Caste population in the country is nearly double of the Scheduled Tribe population.

Scheduled Tribes under the Constitution

The term, 'Scheduled Tribes' is of recent origin which came into being with the birth of the Republic Constitution of India on Jan 26, 1950. Prior to that scheduled Tribes were variously termed as "Aboriginals," "Adivasis," "Forest tribes," "Hill Tribes," and "Primitive Tribes," The term tribe came to be used in denotation of a particular stage of socio-political evolution of a community of people 76 within a given territory and language area upto 1919, they were included along with other categories of backward classes under the head of "Depressed classes" should include

- a) Criminal and wandering tribes.
- b) Aboriginal tribes.
- c) Untouchables.

The need for separating 'aboriginal tribes' from 'Depressed classes' was badly realized by Indian French committee in 1919 and consequently tribal population were accorded a separate nomenclature. In 1931 Census, the term "Primitive Tribes" was used to specify the tribal population of India, who were till these termed 'forest tribes' or 'hill tribes'. The 1941 census just mentions "tribes" all adjectives for the first time being dropped to quality the tribes. Today under the Constitution of India, the tribal population is scheduled and is popularly termed "Scheduled Tribes".

Plan-wise Fund Allocations

Indian government has implemented various programmes for the tribal population through Five Year Plans. Plan wise detailed fund allocation for tribal development sector is consolidated in the following table.

Table 4: Consolidated Details of Plan-wise Fund Allocations for Tribal Welfare (1951-56 to 2007-2012)

Plan	Plan Period	Total outlay for the plan (In Crores)	Allocation for Tribal Development Sector in the total outlay	
			Rupees in Crores	Percentage to the total outlay
I Plan	1951-56	1960.00	19.93	1.02
II Plan	1956-61	4600.00	49.92	1.08
III Plan	1961-66	8576.00	50.53	0.60
Annual Plan	1966-69	6756.00	32.32	0.48
IV Plan	1969-74	15902.00	75.00	0.47
V Plan	1974-79	37250.00	1182.00	0.32
Annual Plan	1979-80	12176.00	855.16	7.02
VI Plan	1980-85	97500.00	4193.00	4.30
VII Plan	1985-90	180000.00	6976.76	3.86
VIII Plan	1992-97	314576.43	18311.93	5.82
IX Plan	1997-2002	859200.00	775.00	0.09
XPlan	2002-2007	1618460	10481	0.64
XI Plan	2007-2012	3644718	3633	0.09
XII Plan	2012-2017	3568626	N.A	N.A

NA: Not Available, Source: Documents of Planning Commission, from 1st plan to 12 plan, Government of India

The plan-wise fund allocation for tribal welfare amount has raised from Rs. 19.93 crores in first five-year plan to Rs. 3633 crores in 11th plan in India.

Programmes and Policies for Tribes in India

The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, is a key piece of forest legislation passed in India on 18 December 2006. It has also been called the Forest Rights Act, the Tribal Rights Act, the Tribal Bill, and the Tribal Land Act. The law concerns the rights of forest-dwelling communities to land and other resources, denied to them over decades as a result of the continuance of colonial forest laws in India.

National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) is an Indian constitutional body was established through Constitution (89th Amendment) Act, 2003. The commission investigate and monitor all matters relating to the safeguards provided for the and Scheduled

Tribes under the Constitution or under any other law for the time being in force or under any order of the Government and to evaluate the working of such safeguards.

The Fifth Schedule of the Constitution provides for the setting up a Tribes' Advisory Council in each of the States having Scheduled Areas. The duty of these Councils is to advise the Government on such matters concerning the welfare of Scheduled Tribes and development of Scheduled Areas.

Under Article 338 of Indian Constitution a Commissioner has been appointed by the President of India. The main duty of the Commissioner is (i) to investigate all matters relating to the safeguards for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes under the Constitution and (ii) to report the President on working of these safeguards. Under Article 164 (i) of the Constitution there is a provision of Welfare Department in the States of Indian Union.

During the Second Five Year Plan (1956-61) a number of special blocks known as Special Multipurpose Tribal Development Block (SMPT), were introduced. This programme covered nearly 71% of tribal areas. As per the recommendation of V. Elwin Committee SMPT Blocks were reorganized and renamed as Tribal Development Blocks (TDB). The Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) in the tribal areas have been restructured as Large sized Agricultural Multipurpose Society (LAMPS) so as to provide a package of service of credit, marketing and supply of consumer articles to the tribal at a single contact point. The Tribal Development Blocks were introduced for the developments of tribal areas. These Tribal Development Blocks were expected to have their role in matters of economic developments, education, health and communication. During Fourth Plan, six Tribal Agencies were started and anthers two were added during the Fifth Plan. These Agencies were expected to incorporate elements of economic development, social services and other progressive measures. Modified Area Development Approach (MADA)scheme has been operating since the Sixth Plan for the total development of the dispersed tribal population residing outside Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) area, which are contiguous smaller areas having a population of 10,000 or more, with 50% tribal concentration.

To tackle the complex and diverse tribal problems effectively, a comprehensive programme of development known as Tribal Sub-Plan was prepared under the Fifth Five Year Plan. Accordingly, all areas with more than 50 per cent tribal population were treated as Sub-Plan areas. A development block was taken as the smallest unit of development under this new strategy. This unit is known as the Integrated Tribal Development Project (ITDP).

Conclusion

The socio-economic conditions of the tribal people of India are not appreciable. Their standards of living are still low. Moreover the tribal development schemes have not brought any changes in the life of majority of the tribal people. Inclusive growth is not making the fruits of development available and accessible to the tribal population of India. To include, it can be summed up that “Inclusion” should be seen as a process of including these excluded sections of the population as agents whose participation is essential in the very design of the development process and not simply welfare targets of development programmes. It is necessary that steps should be taken to make these people informed about the development schemes. At the same time procedures of sanctioning of the schemes should be made easy so that the number of total benefitted families increase.

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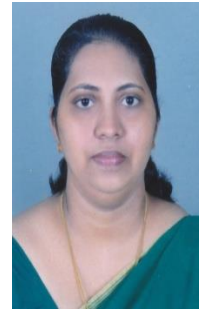
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