



# Tribal development: Issues of Tribal Sub Plan allocation and utilization in Kerala.

Ajitha R

*Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, NMSM government College, Kalpetta, Wayanad, Kerala.*

**Abstract:** In Kerala the popular development experience is challenged and criticized by various marginalized sections on the basis of exclusion faced by them. (D.Shyjan 2009). There exist gaps in the development of these sections when compared to the mainstream. The TSP was introduced in 1974. It is to channelize the flow of outlays and benefits from general development sectors to these sub plans at least in proportion to their population for the betterment of STs. The general economic planning actually failed to 'trickle down' the benefits of development to the poor and marginalized people and to bring down the continuing socio-economic disparities in the society that seriously affect them. So, it is valid to raise some relevant questions related to the execution of TSP in Kerala. They are; why they fall behind the other social groups in many development indicators, even after the three decades of specific targeted TSP for them?. How far these programmes were successful in solving the problems faced by scheduled tribes?. Is there any failure in the policy and programme formulation and implementation?. In this context we focusing TSP that aimed at the empowerment and development of STs and also looks at the allocation and utilization of TSP in Kerala and identifies reasons for the flaws in its implementation and its inability to solve many problem faced by them. . The study concludes that a large share of TSP is underutilized and also the funds are used for some other purpose. So there should be a reorientation of the TSP programme

**Key words:** Scheduled Tribes, Tribal Sub Plan, Allocation and Utilization.

## Introduction

The tribal community in Kerala is largely heterogeneous and each community has different traditions, social custom, beliefs, rules and practices. Census 2011 identifies 36 tribal communities in Kerala with 1.45% of the state's total population. Wayanad has the highest number of tribes with 37.36%, followed by Idukki 14% and Palakkad 10.89%. Idukki and Palakkad constitute more than 60% of Scheduled Tribes in the state. (KSPB2019). Among the notified tribal communities in the state, Paniya (22.40%), who mainly inhabit Wayanad district, is the dominant tribal community. It is one of the poorest and most deprived communities in the state. The second largest community is kurichian of Wayanad and malayarayan of Idukki and Kottayam each forming around 9% of the total tribal population. Irular form 6.5% of the total tribal population and prominently resides in the Attappady region of Palakkad.

Scheduled tribes are the most vulnerable group among the marginalized communities in India. They have been facing highest level of deprivation and marginalization even from the pre-independent period because of the socio-economic backwardness, lack of various forms of capital and geographical isolation. Kerala has a history of an affirmative state and a unique public action which opened a way for its peculiar development democracy. But the popular development experience of Kerala is challenged and criticized by various marginalized sections on the basis of exclusion faced by them. There exists gap in the development of these sections when compared to the mainstream. Balanced growth and economic development are the ultimate aim of every country and plans are designed accordingly

Governments make interventions in an economy through various means like fiscal, regulatory and other tools to achieve desired outcomes and the wellbeing of its people. The major objective of the execution of developmental activities is to reduce the deprivation rate and to ensure the well-being of the people in the country. In India scheduled Tribes lag behind the mainstream development process. In order to eradicate this issue, Tribal Sub Plan was initiated during fifth five-year plan. There are so many studies deals with various aspect of tribal development. P.K.B.Nayar (1985) made a critical appraisal on Tribal Sub Plan of Kerala. In 2009 D. Shyjan and A.S. Sunitha made an attempt to changing phases of Kerala's development experience and the exclusion of tribes. M.A Oommen and D.Shyjan (2014) developed strategic methodology for the local governments to include the excluded. Dr.Ramesh H.Makwana (2017) done a sociological study to analyze the tribal Sub Plan Scheme on tribal communities in Gujarat. Even though there are so many studies, the tribal development issues not much changed.

Why these sections are remaining as marginalized when compared to other sections in a state which made progress in many fronts? It was from the realization that common development programmes does not benefit the marginalized sections, the government formulated Tribal Sub Plan. The TSP was introduced in 1974. It is to channelize the flow of outlays and benefits from general development sectors to these sub plans at least in proportion to their population for the betterment of STs. The general economic planning actually failed to 'trickle down' the benefits of development to the poor and marginalized people and to bring down the continuing socio-economic disparities in the society that seriously affect them. So, it is valid to raise some relevant questions related to the execution of TSP in Kerala. They are; why they fall behind the other social groups in many development indicators, even after the three decades of specific targeted TSP for them?. How far these programmes were successful in solving the problems faced by scheduled tribes?. Is there any failure in the policy and programme formulation and implementation?. In this context we focusing TSP that aimed at the empowerment and development of STs and also looks at the allocation and utilization of TSP in Kerala and identifies reasons for the flaws in its implementation and its inability to solve many problems faced by them. By using planning board (GOK) various years of data examining allocation and utilization of plan funds under TSP, plan wise outlays and expenditure and the utilization of TSP funds by various departments. The paper also going through the drawbacks of the TSP implementation.

## Objectives

The objectives of the study include:

1. To examine the allocation and utilization of Tribal Sub Plan in Kerala.
2. To identify the drawbacks of the Tribal Sub plan implementation.

## Tribal Sub Plan in Kerala: An overview

Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) was a concept introduced for the development of ST population during the Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-75). The objective of TSP was to give a special care to STs through a sub plan approach. Since 1983-84, the strategy has undergone changes and it has been decentralized at the district level. The 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendments were coincided in the Ninth Five Year Plan and the local governments have been entrusted with specified responsibilities relating to development and welfare of scheduled tribes. (Economic Review 2019).

Due to the typical settlement pattern, cultural practices and traditional identities the ST population are consolidated in clusters and are concentrated in interior forest and adjoining areas. By considering this the strategy of TSP was to protect tribal people and there by attain their development. As per the TSP strategy the state allocates an amount which is more than proportional to the tribal population (1.45%) in the state. The TSP provision in the budget is for the exclusive development of STs in the state. During 2015-16, about 3.02% of the state plan outlay was provided under TSP. for the year 2016-17 the % allocation to TSP has declined to 2.84%. In 2018-19 and 2019-20, about 2.83 percent of the State Plan Outlay was provided under Tribal Sub Plan (Economic Review 2019).

Kerala government allocates fund for the TSP more than that of ST population percentage. Assistance is provided through the LSGs and also through SC/ST development department for the development of SC/ST in the state. Out of the total TSP plan outlay a certain percentage of funds are allocated to local governments for implementation of schemes under decentralized planning and the remaining to the SC/ST development department. A system of earmarking certain amount of TSP as pooled fund under SCSP and TSP for taking up schemes adopting a project approach was introduced. This gives scope to get wide range of schemes with varied objectives and physical targets, which put together, will help the all- round development of the targeted groups. (Economic review 2019). The major sources of funds for tribal developments are (1). State plan allocation (2). Funds under TSP components of Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) (3). Special central assistance to TSP (SCA to TSP) grant under article 275(1) of the constitution, other allocation for schemes implemented by ministry of tribal affairs and (4). Institutional finance.

### Year-wise SCSP/TSP outlay from 2014-15 to 2019-20 (₹ in crore)

Year	SCSP	TSP
2014-15	1962.00	600.00
2015-16	1968.00	604.50
2016-17	2354.40	682.80
2017-18	2599.65	751.08
2018-19	2859.62	826.19
2019-20	3002.84	866.26

Source: Budget Document

The Total Plan provision allocated for the development of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in 2014-15 was ₹1962.00 crore and ₹600 crore. In 2019-20, ₹3,002.84 crore was allocated to the Scheduled Caste Development and ₹866.26 crore to

Scheduled Tribes. Year-wise details of allocation from 2014-15 to 2019-20 shows an increasing trend. But the present system has too many flaws. The benefits of the schemes are not really reaching to the needy.

### TSP allocation and expenditure in LSGs of Kerala. (2012-13 to 2016-17(in crore))

year	TSP		
	Budget allocation	Expenditure	Difference
2012-13	110.98	99.65	11.33
2013-14	124.3	136.89	-12.59
2014-15	139.21	121.61	17.6
2015-16	139.21	149.78	-10.57
2016-17	156.00	124.69	31.31

Source: GOK (2017), Kerala State Planning Board

As one of the major objectives of decentralized planning is to empower social equity and to improve the socioeconomic status of scheduled tribes and enhancing their quality of life. Out of the total TSP plan outlay, a portion of funds earmarked to LSGs for implementation of schemes under decentralized planning. The table shows the outlay and expenditure of TSP in 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan. There is a slight increase in the outlay but the expenditure trend shows a mixed picture that except in the years 2013-14 and 2015-16, in the rest of the years unspent amount remained high. In 2016-17 the unspent amount is 31.31 crores.

### Special Central Assistance to TSP

The SCA to TSP was introduced during 6<sup>th</sup> FYP in India. Under the scheme the assistance is given to state government as an additive to state TSP. The SCA to TSP released by GOI as an addition to state pan funds is meant for under taking employment cum income generation activities and the infrastructure incidental to activities based on family and self-help groups. 70% of the fund has been utilized for implementing primary schemes and 30% used for critical infrastructure in the sectors of drinking water and watershed management under the scheme 30% beneficiaries are women.

**SCA to TSP in Kerala during 2009-10 to 2016-17(in crores)**

year	outlay	expenditure	unspent
2009-10	450.00	448.80	1.2
2010-11	500.00	499.54	0.46
2011-12	590.00	588.08	1.92
2013-14	767.00	765.46	1.54
2014-15	700.00	699.82	0.18
2015-16	1000.00	992.85	7.15
2016-17	1200.00	1156.65	44
2017-18	1300.00	1255.31	44.69
2018-19	1000.00	545.06	454.06

Source: Scheduled Tribes Development Department

The table shows the poor spending of Special Central Assistance to TSP. The unspent amount is increasing in recent years. In 2015-16 and 2016-17 SCA outlay increased from 1000 crore to 1200 crore and the unspent amount increased from 7.15 to 44. The growing underutilization of funds when these communities are facing burning problem Special Central Assistance to Tribal Sub Plan (SCA to TSP).

**Plan Wise Outlay and Expenditure under TSP (In crore)**

Plan	Outlay	Expenditure	% of expenditure to outlay
6 <sup>th</sup> plan	18.63	18.63	100
7 <sup>th</sup> plan	35.5	35.5	95.2
8 <sup>th</sup> plan	147.48	132.91	90.1
9 <sup>th</sup> plan	317.67	248.35	78.2
10 <sup>th</sup> plan	648.54	481.68	74.3

Source: GOK (2017), Kerala State Planning Board

The shows that a large part of TSP is going underutilized. During the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> plan period state only utilized 78.2 and 74.3 percentage respectively. The resources kept apart for the development of marginalized sections are being underutilized in Kerala that claims to an egalitarian society compared to other states. The severe underutilization of TSP

funds points to many factors. First and foremost, it indicates the lack of democratization in TSP fund usage. It is to be remembered that all this underutilization is occurring to the allocated TSP resources which is far less than their share in population.

### **Drawbacks of the TSP implementation.**

Underutilization of the fund is the most important problem. It is an outcome of the lack of democratization in the implementation process of the plan. Apart from that there are many drawbacks for the TSP implementation. The same manner in which gramasabha works, the unscientific methods of beneficiary selection, lack of coordination between LSG and ST development department in developing and implementing TSP schemes, absence of a separate monitoring system for TSP, inordinate delay in preparing progress reports, inability to claim special central assistance from Centre, lack of free flow of information from local units of administration are some among them (GOK 2008). There has no working strategy to achieve the overall objectives. The implementation may fail if the public is not getting a platform to intervene timely. It is a fact that even in the policy formulation and designing of schemes for ST, their participation is not adequate.

### **Reasons for the failure of TSP planning and implementation.**

- There is a lack of proper information about the tribal situation in each tribal area and the concerned authorities allocated the funds for each tribal development activities without knowing this.
- There exists lack of coordination between the departments dealing with tribal development activities in the state. There are multiple agencies doing same functions and there is no system for solving these issues.
- Absence of proper monitoring system for the evaluation of the effectiveness of TSP.
- Local bodies in the tribal region are not taking initiative for calling 'oorukootoms' for identifying the basic needs and demands of tribal communities. This affect the creation of better infrastructure and for bringing better programmes for socio-economic development of tribes.
- The nontribal members are always protecting their own interest in planning and implementing developmental activities in the name of the welfare of tribal communities.
- The functions of NGOs in the tribal regions are not supporting or assisting the activities of local governments. They are acting as a parallel system of governments in the tribal areas through they are using government project for their survival. (Nishamol.M and Dr.Rajesh.K 2015)

### **Conclusion**

Scheduled tribes are historically marginalized and its harmful effects continues across generation to their present. Government expenditure activities have the potential to bring great changes among them. The schemes for STs is doing in a conventional manner without any clear-cut picture of this and their actual position in the society. This makes the TSP programmes ineffective in many ways to address the new issues faced by them. The gap between allocation and expenditure of TSP is varying across years and the utilization of SCA to TSP is very less in Kerala . A large share of TSP is underutilized and also the funds are used for some other purpose. So there should be a reorientation of the TSP programme through a democratic process and the implementation of the plan should be done within the reach of the people, media, NGOs, people's representatives etc. Democratization is essential to have desired outcomes and the government's actions should be accountable and responsive to the people's needs. There should be a proper platform for the people to intervene in the governance. But this is not happening. There is lack of democratization in fund usage and exists mismatch between

government programmes and the problems or needs of the STs. The state government should take an initiative to bring awareness among the public regarding such plans. These changes along with an active and dynamic state only can solve the issues faced by the state and bring Kerala to the forefront as a model to others.

## Reference

- Census of India (2011), Registrar General and Census Commissioner, Government of India.
- Government of Kerala (2019), Economic Review, Kerala State Planning Board, Trivandrum.
- Government of Kerala (2008), Human Development Report of Tribal communities in Kerala, Trivandrum: State planning Board, Kerala.
- D. Shyjan and A S Sunitha (2009), "Changing Phases of Kerala's Development Experience and the Exclusion of Scheduled Tribes: Towards and Explanation." *Arthavijnana*, vol.LI, No.4, Dec 2009, PP 340-359.
- Nayar, P K B. (1985), "Tribal Sub-plan of Kerala: A Critical Appraisal. *Cochin University Law Review*, 9, 189-202."
- Oommen M A & Shyjan D, (2014), "Local Governments and the Inclusion of the Excluded: Towards a Strategic Methodology with Empirical Illustration," Working Papers id:6338, eSocialSciences.
- Dr. Ramesh H. Makwana. (2017), "An impact of tribal sub-plan scheme on tribal community: a sociological study", *International Journal of Development Research*, 7, (07), 13879-13886.
- Dr. Rajesh.K and Nishamol.M (2015), "Re-examining Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) in the context of continuing the Sustenance of tribal deprivation in Kerala."

