



Impact Of Government Schemes And Policies On The Economic Development Of Tribal Communities In Telangana

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Abstract

This paper explores the multifaceted impact of government schemes on the economic development of tribal communities in Telangana, India. Telangana, with a significant tribal population, has been the focus of numerous government initiatives aimed at addressing the socio-economic disparities faced by these communities. Through an analysis of existing literature, policy documents, and empirical evidence, this abstract highlights the diverse ways in which government schemes have influenced the economic landscape of tribal areas in Telangana. The socio-economic context of tribal communities in Telangana, emphasizing their historical marginalization and dependency on traditional livelihoods such as agriculture, forest resources, and artisanal activities. The critical role of government schemes in driving economic development and empowerment among tribal communities in Telangana. It advocates for the continued prioritization of inclusive and sustainable development policies that address the specific needs and aspirations of tribal populations, while also emphasizing the importance of community engagement, participatory decision-making, and robust monitoring mechanisms to maximize the impact of these interventions.

Keywords: Socio-Economic Conditions; Welfare Schemes; Tribes; Telangana

Introduction

India is a nation characterized by its rich tapestry of cultures, religions, traditions, languages, castes, and creeds. Each state within India boasts its own unique cultural heritage and traditions. Among these diverse groups, tribal communities hold significant importance. Referred to as "Adivasis," meaning 'Indigenous People' or 'Original inhabitants of a given region,' these tribal peoples contribute distinct flavors and invaluable treasures to India's cultural landscape. Predominantly, tribal populations are concentrated in regions such as Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, the North Eastern states, and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

The social development of these tribal communities is intricately linked to their economic progress. However, they often encounter numerous obstacles hindering their socio-economic advancement. These challenges include geographical and cultural isolation, inadequate access to healthcare facilities, insufficient fulfillment of basic needs, limited control over resources and assets, educational and skill deficiencies, malnutrition, inadequate shelter, limited access to clean water and sanitation, susceptibility to shocks, violence, and crime, as well as a lack of access to proper infrastructure and technologies, and political marginalization.

Addressing the social sector needs of these communities, particularly in areas such as education, healthcare, housing, and water supply, is imperative for their economic development. By ensuring access to these essential services, tribal communities can enhance their overall well-being, foster human capital development, and pave the way for sustainable economic growth and prosperity.

The criteria followed for specification of a community as a Scheduled Tribe are:

1. Indications of primitive traits,
2. Distinctive Culture,
3. Geographical isolation,
4. Shyness of contact with the community at large,
5. Backwardness

This criterion is not spelt out in the Constitution but has become well established. It takes into account the definitions in the 1931 Census; the reports of the first Backward Classes Commission (Kalelkar), 1955; the Advisory Committee on Revision of SC/ST lists (Lokur Committee), 1965; the Joint Committee of Parliament on the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment) Bill, 1967 and Chanda Committee Report, 1969.

According to the Census of 2011, the total tribal population of Telangana was 31,77,940. The numerically dominant tribal groups of Telangana are Lambada/ Banjara, Koya, Gonds, Yerukala/Kurru and Pradhan. This paper tries to focus on the impact of the tribes of Telangana and the welfare schemes put forth for them by the government.

Profile of tribal people in Telangana State

Telangana state is very rich in the variety of cultures that represent all stages of human progress. It has Chenchus, as primitive as those who lived in Stone Age, Gonds, Andhs and Bhils, Koyas and Konda Reddis are still found inclined to indulge in shifting cultivation. Mostly they are found in the highland of Adilabad, Karimnagar, Warangal and Khammam districts and also in Nallamala Plateaux of Mannanur and Farahabad of Mahaboobnagar districts. Yerukala tribe women are indulged in traditional profession of fortune telling. Pradhans in Adilabad district recite mythologies, folk tales and songs of their gods and goddesses at various festivals, ceremonies and fairs for which service they are paid in cash or kind.

Socio-economic status of the tribal communities of Telangana

A study results on the economic development of primitive tribes in Telangana showed that majority of the respondents of the study area were illiterates, adopted nuclear family system and had own houses. Majority of the respondents were farmers, followed by agricultural labourers. As they had no skills in modern agricultural practices, they practised mono cropping pattern. The respondents acquired the modern inputs and financial assistance from Integrated Tribal Development Agency. Majority (87%) earned income less than 1500 rupees per month and they spend the money mostly on food. The results showed that there is a significant relationship between the government policies and schemes and standard of living of the tribals.

The results of a comparative analysis of the tribal diversity in Telangana districts depicted that Warangal district of Telangana was dominated by Lambdas (46%). Educational status was much better in Vizag than in Warangal. In terms of child immunization, both districts have shown almost same statistics. Ninety four (94) per cent of the respondents in Visakhapatnam district were seasonal wage earners, whereas in Warangal district, 82 per cent were seasonal wage earners. The approximate monthly consumption expenditure on food items is more in Warangal than in Vizag. In terms of land holdings, majority of them hold very small lands which are ancestral in nature. Non-institutional indebtedness is high in Warangal than in Vizag. In both areas, people were aware of government programmes, and the percentage of people who availed these programmes increased drastically from 2012.

Forests play a vital role in the economic development of the forest dwelling tribes of Andhra Pradesh as they provide them with food in the form of tubers, roots, leaves, fruits, flesh of animals and birds and cures illnesses by supplying medicinal herbs. Skins, hides, horns of wild animals and minor forest produce are exploited for commercial purposes. But, this agro-forest based economy is subject to the behaviour of nature. The rocky terrain, infertile soil, freak nature, extreme seasonal conditions, lack of perennial sources of water, predatory birds and animals and the parasitic hold of money lenders and plains sow cars force them to live in perpetual poverty.

Welfare schemes by the Government of Telangana for the tribal communities

For the benefit of tribal population, Telangana government has taken up serious action to implement various welfare schemes as given below:

Education schemes

Funding for maintenance of educational institutions, hostels, integrated hostels, ashram schools, post -matric hostels, tribal welfare primary schools, teacher education colleges, student coaching programmes for competitive examinations

- Tuition Fee and Post-Matric Scholarships
- Pre-Matric Scholarships
- Monetary Support to study in Hyderabad Public Schools
- Upgrading Tribal Welfare Ashram Schools into Schools of Excellence
- Setting up Residential Schools for Tribals
- Setting up Residential Schools for Tribal Girls
- Upgradation of Residential Schools into Junior Colleges of Excellence

Other developmental Schemes

Kalyana Lakshmi: With a view to alleviate financial distress in the families of Scheduled Tribes, “Kalyana Lakshmi” scheme under which financial assistance of Rs.51,000 shall be paid to every ST unmarried girl of 18 years and above or at the time of marriage parental income shall not exceed 2 lakhs per annum.

Komaram Bheem memorial: In memory of the brave Gond tribal leader who fought against the Nizams under the slogan “Jal, Jameen, Jungal” the Government sanctioned construction of Komram Bheem Smriti Chihanam and also development of Jodeghat village as Tribal Cultural Hub and Tourism

Impart training

Center, at an outlay of 50 Crores.

- **Constructions of Roads under NABARD Programme:** The objective of the scheme is to provide road connectivity in tribal areas with financial assistance from NABARD.
- **Construction of Go-downs and Storage Points:** This scheme is intended to provide Go-downs /Storage Points for supply of daily food requirements to people living in tribal areas.
- **Works under Medaram Jathara:** Under this scheme, all infra-structural works required for the conduct of biggest Tribal Jathara “Sammakka Saralamma Jathara” being held once in two years at Medaram village in Warangal District will be taken up.
- **Construction of buildings for Integrated Residential Schools:** The objective of this scheme is to provide additional infra-structure for Ashram High School and Residential Schools in tribal areas with financial assistance from NABARD, Trench XVIII and XIX.

Economic support schemes

Girijan Co-operative Corporation (GCC) undertakes procurement of minor forest produce (MFP) and agriculture produce from tribals at remunerative prices, undertakes public distribution in remote tribal areas, provides seasonal agricultural credit to ST farmers.

Telangana State Tribal Mining Company Limited (TRIMCO) was established to take up mining activities with active participation of tribal mining Co-operative Societies, as there is availability of mines and minerals in Telangana State.

Consequent on State Reorganization Act - 2014, the Andhra Pradesh Scheduled Tribal Cooperative Finance Corporation Limited (TRICOR) is bifurcated into two separate operational units. Thus, Andhra Pradesh Scheduled Tribal Cooperative Finance Corporation Limited (TRICOR) for residuary state of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana State Scheduled Tribal Cooperative Finance Corporation (TRICOR) for newly formed state of Telangana.

The major activities of TRICOR are

To provide financial assistance to STs for Economic Support in the areas of:

- Agriculture
- Fisheries
- Animal Husbandry
- Minor Irrigation
- ISB sectors
- Self-Employment
- Skill up gradation for wage employment/formal employment/self – employment
- Capacity Building

Special programme for development of PVTGs through Conservation-Cum Development Plan (CCDP).

Conservation cum Development Plan (CCDP) was introduced during XI Five Year Plan period effective from 01/04/2008. The programme aimed at planning socio – economic development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) in a holistic manner by adopting habitat development approach and intervening in all spheres of their social and economic life to enhance the quality of life so that a visible impact is made. The major activities of the programme are as follows:

- Construction of Multi-purpose building
- Construction of Internal roads/drains
- Providing Corpus fund to SHG for livelihood interventions
- Any other felt need of the PVTG community for which there is no source from any other government programme/ scheme.

Skill development programmes

Separate Sub Mission was constituted for STs for implementation of Skill Development initiatives in the Scheduled Areas. Multiple Skill Development activities have been initiated to provide employment opportunities to the unemployed tribal youth on its own and through training partners from Government training institutes/Private training institutes for the benefit of tribal unemployed youth. The Strategy of implementation of this programme is:

- Organizing orientation programmes in the name of Bhavitha for creating awareness among the tribal youth.
- Imparting placement linked training to ST youth for up gradation of their skills.
- Organising Direct Placement drives in tribal areas.
- Organizing Self Employment/Entrepreneurial Development Programme (EDP).

Apart from these

Funding for maintenance of educational institutions and hostels, integrated hostels, ashram schools, post-matric hostels, tribal welfare primary schools, teacher education colleges, student coaching programmes for competitive examinations

- Gurukulam schools
- Monetary Support to study in Hyderabad Public Schools
- Tuition Fee and Post-Matric Scholarships
- Pre-Matric Scholarships
- Upgrading Tribal Welfare Ashram Schools into Schools of Excellence
- Setting up Residential Schools for Tribals
- Setting up Residential Schools for Tribal Girls
- Upgradations of Residential Schools into Junior Colleges of Excellence are also put forth, which are similar to the ones put forth by Telangana Government

Impact on Tribal Communities

Government schemes can have a significant impact on the economic development of tribal communities. Here are some ways in which these schemes can make a difference:

Infrastructure Development:

Government schemes often focus on building infrastructure such as roads, schools, hospitals, and irrigation facilities in tribal areas. Improved infrastructure can enhance connectivity, access to markets, and basic services, which are essential for economic growth.

Livelihood Support:

Many government schemes provide support for livelihood development in tribal communities. This support may include training in agriculture, animal husbandry, handicrafts, and other income-generating activities. By equipping tribal members with skills and resources, these schemes help them create sustainable livelihoods and reduce dependency on subsistence agriculture or forest resources.

Financial Inclusion:

Government initiatives like microfinance programs and self-help groups aim to promote financial inclusion among tribal communities. Access to credit and financial services can empower tribal entrepreneurs to start businesses, invest in productive assets, and participate more actively in the formal economy.

Tribal Welfare Programs:

Various welfare programs target specific needs of tribal communities, such as education, healthcare, housing, and nutrition. By addressing these socio-economic indicators, these schemes contribute to overall human development and well-being, laying the foundation for economic progress.

Land and Forest Rights:

Land and forest rights are crucial for tribal communities, as they often depend on these resources for their livelihoods and cultural identity. Government schemes that focus on securing and protecting these rights can prevent land displacement, promote sustainable resource management, and ensure equitable access to natural resources, thus supporting economic development.

Skill Development and Employment:

Skill development programs and initiatives to promote entrepreneurship among tribal youth can help address unemployment and underemployment issues. By providing opportunities for skill acquisition and facilitating access to markets, these schemes enable tribal individuals to explore diverse career options and contribute to economic growth.

Market Linkages and Value Addition:

Government interventions that facilitate market linkages and value addition for tribal products can enhance the income of tribal producers. Initiatives such as setting up marketing cooperatives, establishing market infrastructure, and promoting branding and certification of tribal products can improve market access and competitiveness.

The impact of government schemes on the economic development of tribal communities depends on various factors, including the design and implementation of the schemes, local context and conditions, community participation, and effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. When designed and implemented thoughtfully, these schemes have the potential to catalyze positive change and contribute to the holistic development of tribal communities.

Conclusion

Social and economic justice, equality of status and opportunities, assurance of the individual's dignity are ensured by the Constitution of India for all the citizens among other things. The constitution of India is enriched with several provisions for schedule castes and schedule tribes to safeguard and promote their cultural, social, educational, and economic interests to bring them in the main-stream of the nation.

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