

AN ANALYSIS ON DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVES OF SCHEDULED TRIBES IN ODISHA

Dr. Nityananda Barik¹, Mr. Prabira Sethy²

¹Assistant Professor in Women's Studies Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha

²Assistant Professor in Political Science Maharaja Agrasena College, University of Delhi, Delhi

Abstract

The present article is focusing on the development perspectives of tribal community in Odisha. The tribal communities are found in Odisha in large numbers, specially, in the north-western and south western districts. From the community development programmes to till date, there are number of welfare measures which are meant for socio-economic and all-round development of tribal people. In order to bring them into the mainstream of the society, different projects are being implemented. As such, the formation of special department at the government level, formation of tribal blocks, The TSP (Tribal Sub Plan) approach, special project implementation, special plan for KBK districts, Orissa Tribal Empowerment and Livelihood Programmes (OTELP), establishment of tribal academy and research institute, establishment of tribal cooperatives are the thrust areas of development in which tribal people of Odisha are being benefited. But the TSP approach is getting momentum towards capacity buildings of tribal people in recent time, As such, the TSP is significant and relevant for tribal society.

Key words: Committees, Projects, Programmes, livelihood, KBK, OTELP, TSP

INTRODUCTION

Scheduled tribe is a community which is isolated from the urban community. Normally, these community lives in remote areas and hilly areas. The forest-based products become their source of livelihood. They believe in nature strongly. Now- a-days tribal people are found in the entire globe. It implies that they are found in many places of the world and most tribals are poorest among the poor. The tribals believes in community life and stay in the community. Among these communities, there are different sub communities which adopts their socio-economic life style. In India, such communities are residing in many states. Basically, it is found at Chhatisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, West Bengsl, Jharkhand, Gujrat, Maharastra Bihar etc.

The existence of tribal community has started from very beginning of the society. They are called as the ancient civilization people. In ancient period, the

aboriginal tribes continued to stay in isolation at dense and interior forests with little or no interaction with other people. Historians opined that the early tribal community did not require any tribal policy as they maintain their lives with association with forests and nature. The mediaeval history if India witnessed the rise of tribal community. They revolted against the Muslim rulers with strong dedication. Even, few tribal people joined as warriors which ultimately assisted to establish kingdoms inhabited by their peoples. The Rajput and the Gond Kingdoms were the classic examples of evolution. But it can be pointed that no such tribal policy had been initiated during early part of mediaeval period in the regime of Muslim rulers. The later medieval period witnessed that the Muslim rulers adopted a patronizing attitude towards tribal chief. They understood the need of tribal community and recognized their courage and authority. As such, the rulers gave them some of the high positions in the administrative hierarchy.

During the British regime in India, tribals were isolated from the mainstream. Under the Scheduled District Act of 1874, the areas of tribal community remained separate from administration point of view. The same provision and principles continued upto commencement of Government of India Act 1919. But the socio-economic status of tribal community had been changed after independence of India. The Constituent Assembly understood the problem of tribal community and took initiation for inclusion of tribal in the mainstream of development. The Government of India followed the policy of isolation in a slightly modified form. As such, special care is taken for the partial exclusion of tribal areas. In the later part such category of isolation contributed to form an independent Naga state and Jharkhand state.

TRIBES IN ODISHA STATE

Odisha state is situated in the eastern part of India connecting to Bay of Bengal in the east, West Bengal and Jharkhand in North, Chhatisgarh in West and Andhra Pradesh in South. The tribal communities are living in a greater number at northern, southern, western and central districts of Odisha state. The majority tribal peoples are living in many districts of Odisha, including, Koraput, Rayagada, Nabarangpur, Malakanagiri, Kalahandi, Nuapada, Mayurbhanj, Sundargarh, Kandhamal, Gajapati, Keonjhar, Balasore districts. Odisha state is one where Sixty-Two (62) categories of tribal community are living. From among them Twelve (12) "Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups" PVTGs are living in different districts with due identity and governmental recognition. As per source, These 62 tribal communities are named as "Bagta, Baiga, Banjara, Bathudi, Bhatra, Bhuyan, Bhumia, Bhumij, Bhunjia, Binjhal, Binjhia, Birhor, Banda (Paroja), Chenchu, Dal, Desua, Dharua, Didayi, Gadaba, Gandia, Ghara, Gond, Ho, Holva, Jatpur, Juang, Kandha Gouda, Kawar, Kharia, Kharwar, Khond, Kisan, Kol, Kolah, Koli, Kondadora, Kora, Korua, Kotia, Koya, Kulis, Lodha, Madia, Mahali, Mankidi, Mankirdia, Matya (Matia), Mirdhas, Munda, Mundari, Omatya, Oraon, Parenga, Paroja, Pentia, Rajuar, Santal, Saora, Shabar and Tharua".

As per Census 2001, Odisha state tribal population comprises of 95,90,756. number which constituted

22.8% of Odisha's total population and 9.2% of India's total tribals population. Out of scheduled tribe total population, male member comprised of 47, 27, 732- and female member comprised of 48,63,024. The TSP area covered 69,623,80 Sq. Kms. In comparison to previous decades, the education level has been increased significantly among them.

Tribal society is composed of a organized groups of people who have learn to live and work together. They have their own traditional rules and regulations. They believe in their own culture. The tribal people express their cultural identity and distinctiveness in their social organization, language, rituals and festivals. They are also distinctive in their dress, ornaments, art an craft. In Odisha tribals of many districts do practice of having such culture. The tribes of Odisha believe that their life and work is controlled by supernatural beings whose adobe is around them in hills, forests, rivers and houses.

DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVES

In post independent period, India saw many development programmes for the tribal community. It is impressive that B.R. Ambedkar empowered the backward class community. As such, the tribal welfare measures continued to develop their status. In no way the Odisha state remained behind it. It implies that Odisha state took many important and relevant steps towards tribal development approach in terms of socio-economic-cultural prospects. Thus, some of the important development measures are presented below:

i) Formation of Separate Department

A Committee during British regime came to Odisha (earlier it was Orissa) in the year 1938 and submitted its status report on tribal community and tribal regions. That report was reviewed in 1946 by the Backward Classes Welfare Section. It resulted in the formation of a separate department in Odisha government in 1948. That department was called as "Backward Class Welfare Department". In the later part, such department was renamed as "Rural Welfare Department". At present, it is converted into the "Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Department".

In Odisha, Tribes Advisory Council (TAC) was formed in 1950. Its aim was to advise Scheduled development perspectives. It also emphasized on the welfare measures of tribal community and reported to Government of Odisha time to time.

ii) Formation of Tribal Blocks

A special project, named as, Multipurpose Tribal Blocks are formed under the banner of Community Development Programmes. Its objectives were to make all round development of tribals in terms of their culture, tradition, livelihood, life, safeguarding land, protecting forest, forest based resources, and allied aspects linked to tribal people. On the recommendation of Elwin Committee in the year 1960, the Odisha Government could able to start tribal blocks. Such tribal blocks were constituted on the principles that a block must comprised 50% tribals as per the norms of recommendations of such Committee.

iii) The TSP (Tribal Sub Plan)

Under the banner of Five Year Plan from the year 1974 to 1979 (Fifth Plan period) 'A Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP)' was implemented. Such plan was meant to make assessment on the status of tribal community those who inhabited at tribal concentrated areas and tribal dispersed areas. Such plan was constituted with the broad objectives, such as to make an assessment on the increasing gap among tribal communities vis a vis non-tribal communities. Again it aimed at for taking steps for reducing such gap, to develop tribal people, to wipe out the exploitation and discrimination as faced by tribal people, decreasing the rate of bonded labour, utilizing forest based land, reforming in land pattern and over all socio economic development. The funds for TSP had been allocated from different sources of sanctioned schemes. The outline parameter was to "protect tribal interests from liquor vendors, land alienation, money lending and collection of forest produce". The Odisha state also adopted said approach in 1979 with focus to develop the tribal community. Its areas were to cover where Integrated Tribal Development Projects (ITDP) had been launched or were to launch. As such Odisha State developed 118 Tribal Development Blocks over 21 ITDP. The ITDA became the executive

authority for execution of programmes at identified areas. As such, it covered 1,549 Gram Panchayats (GPs) and 17,597 villages in Odisha.

iv) Special Project Implementation

During 1988, a special tribal development project with support from IFAD (International Fund for Agriculture Development) had been started. The project was supposed to be ended within 14 years at Kashipur block of Rayagada district in two phases. The aim and objective of the said project was to develop in in the field of livelihood, agriculture, health and education etc. But, in the later part, it failed to cover full term of the project. During continuance of the project for seven years little changes occurred among the tribals of Kashipur block.

In another instances, DANIDA (Danish International Development Agency) launched an Integrated Livestock Development Project in Koraput district of Odisha state. It was stopped in the year 2000 during the pilot project. But, other opportunities in the form of Long Term Action Plan (LTAP) came to the tribal communities of KBK (Koraput, Bolangir, Kalahandi district) region.

In the year 2003-04, the Government of Odisha took another step for implementing a special project for the enhancement of status of tribal communities. The projected was named as "Orissa Tribal Empowerment and Livelihood Programme" (OTELP). It was continued 7 districts, that is, Gajapati, Kalahandi, Koraput, Kandhamal, Rayagada, Malakanagiri and Nabarangpur of Southern regions of Odisha in the initial stage. Such project proceeded with support from IFAD (International Fund for Agriculture Development), DFID (Department for International Development) and World Food Programme (WFP) for period of 10 years. As it was long term project, it aimed at standardising the food habits, enhancing in the pattern of livelihoods, promoting sustainable natural resources and developing socio economic status.

v) Special Plan for KBK

The Long Term Action Plan (LTAP) had been implemented in the in KBK districts which comprises total of Eight (8) districts, Fourteen (14)

subdivision, Thirty seven (37) Tehesils, Eighty (80) blocks, 1437 gram panchayats, twelve thousands two hundred ninety three (12293) villages and areas of 47,810.2 Sq. kms. The said project was settled in the year 1995. The project aimed at reaching its targets within initial period of seven years. Its objective was to integrate the locally available resources with the development measures. But the project could not progress significantly in improving the socio- economic conditions of people of tribal communities. During the period 1998-99 to 2006-07, the KBK project was needed to revise in considering the sectoral development situation in drought management, poverty eradication, life culture, reducing mortality rate, employment opportunities, social security and infrastructural development. The fund was allocated to different areas of development perspective programmes and was monitored by the administrative mechanism. Basically, it focussed on the major programmes like emergency feeding for elderly people, nutritious food for children, medical services, mobile health units, irrigation of agricultural land, water shed management, educating tribal girls, reducing drop out rate etc.

vi) Establishment of ATDC

The ATDC (The Academy of Tribal Dialect and Culture) has been continuing at Bhubaneswar, the capital of Odisha State, since 1979. The institute is to improve high quality of research work on tribal. However, following objectives have been associated with the institute. These includes, “Preserving and promoting tribal dialect, art and culture; Organising tribal dialect training centres; Promoting study, dissemination and compilation of tribal literature; Preparation of grammar books and primers in tribal languages; Conducting cultural programmes like seminars, conferences and tribal exhibitions to depict tribal art, culture and heritage; Publication of works on tribal art, crafts, culture and heritage, social customs, language and dialect; To encourage and organise adult literacy programmes in tribal areas”.

vii) Establishment of SC & ST Training Institute

The Institute was established in 1952 at Bhubaneswar.

This institute also emphasizes on undertaking of research and training activities of SC & ST community. In another side, it emphasizes on broad objectives which includes “Research activities for diagnostic and monographic studies of the scheduled tribes and scheduled castes; Determination of ethnic status of different communities, STs or SCs; Identification of primitive tribes and pockets to be covered under ITDP”.

viii) Establishment of TDCCOL

The TDCCOL (Tribal Development Cooperative Corporation of Odisha Limited) was registered under the Cooperative Act 1962 and it came into force from October 1967. Its aims and objectives are “To procure Minor Forest Produce (MFP) and Surplus Agriculture Produce (SAP) collected by the tribals at fair and remunerative prices and to arrange their marketing; To supply essential commodities and other consumer goods to tribals at fair price; To arrange for the processing of procured commodities with a view to adding value and creating employment opportunities; To advance consumption-cum-production loans to the tribals in order to protect them from moneylenders”.

CONCLUSION

Development programmes for tribal people in India reached in a critical situation in facing major hurdles during war in the year 1962 to 1965. Again, the rising of Maoists / Naxalites in the forest-based areas obstructed in the path of development. Though such organization worked for tribal community, yet they stood against the Government schemes and policies. The organizations had been managed and strengthened by youth. In some occasions, tribals reacted and came forward for the social movement against the Government policies. On account of the displacement policies of the Government, tribal people revolted and demonstrated against the Government. Though, the Community Development Programme of India initially focused on the development of tribal people, but it did not succeed due to its gap in policy formulation and implementation in the first and second five year plan period. Even in the fourth five year Plan (1969–74) the benefits of planned expenditures had not reached

the tribal community as desired primarily because of their socio-cultural set up.

The presence of tribe has become a distinguishing feature in Odisha state. The tribal people have been considered as indigenous group who follow their specific culture and particular ideology. Though they were more numerous in ancient and medieval Odisha, but today they possess a sizable number of the population. The population resides as the indigenous tribal population, mostly in the north – western and south western districts of Odisha with traditional means of livelihood. They depend on forests and forest-based products to maintain their family and their sustenance in the society. Their livelihood depends on cultivation at forest areas. During the post independent period, Odisha has taken a number projects and development perspectives for them. The policies are purely meant to empower the tribals in terms of education, health, employment, etc. Thus, in this way the progressive indicators for tribal community in Odisha have been increased and seem to reach at the target point. In current situation, tribal girls are empowered in pursuing education, doing jobs and achieving in sports, athletics and skill development activities. The holistic approach of education and massive sensitization process have created a good atmosphere in the tribal populated areas and enlightened tribals towards empowerment.

End Notes

I KBK districts consists of eight districts namely, Koraput, Rayagada, Malakanagiri, Nabarangpur, Kalahandi, Nuapada, Bolangir and Sonepur.

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