

STUDY ON PROBLEMS OF TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

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Abstract: Taking into account the common pattern of deprivation and oppression, the two ethnic groups of scheduled tribes and scheduled castes are grouped together to identify their problems, and ameliorate their socio-economic conditions. According to the author, this approach is unacceptable, because it obscures the correct interpretation of their issues and then the measures taken for their improvement are insufficient and inaccurate. To illustrate his view, ecologically, while the tribals are isolated, the scheduled castes are exposed; demographically, the former are concentrated in some continuous geographical areas while the latter are scattered in high caste villages; economically, the former are bound to land and forest, while the latter are largely dependent on high caste villagers; culturally speaking, the former enjoy a distinct lifestyle distinguished by their distinct cultures, heritage, love of independence and reverence for self-identity, while the latter hold the lowest rank in the caste hierarchy and suffer from social impairment and lack of esteem for themselves. In view of these factors, the two classes suffer from two distinct types of diseases for a social doctor, and thus deserve specific treatment. The central and the respective governments have made efforts to alter the fate of tribes living in different parts of India. What the Union Governments have done in the name of tribal welfare can be had from several reports like annual reports of the commissioner castes and scheduled tribes from 1950 onward, report of Classes Commission 1955, reports of the study team on social backward classes 1959, report of the committee on special tribal blocks 1960, report of the employment of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes 1964, committee on tribal economy in forest areas 1967, report team on tribal development program 1969, reports of the committee on the welfare of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes a few other reports released by the respective state government. These reports, as well as the past experience of the tribals in the nation, it becomes evident that the desired results have not been achieved, and our goal; to do good to the tribals has been suffered at three levels: (i) strategy, (ii) implementation, and (iii) recruitment training.

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Introduction

The term “tribe” though a regular word in most of the scholastic dimensions of today’s world, astonishingly hasn’t found a universal definition till date even after years of study and research. The problem is not lack of dedication or interest, but the world is so diverse and dynamic to accommodate dissimilar sets of human populations into one mould. For example, the tribes call themselves by names which associate them to their land and surroundings; they declare themselves to be the first inhabitants of their land, or the “first human beings”. This assertion though falls short in the constitutional framework of defining the tribes based on their socio-economic status in comparison to the other sub-populations of the country. The Indian Constitution defines them under the constitutional term, “the Scheduled Tribes”, which serves the purpose of designating certain communities, where membership is acquired by birth, for the benefits that the government provides them with the explicit aim of bringing them at par with the other communities of the country. Article 366(35) of the Constitution of India states that the Scheduled Tribes are those communities which are scheduled in accordance

with Article 332 of the constitution. But, this definition is again contradicted by the field study approach of the sociological, anthropological and historical scholars along with the different NGOs working with the tribes, who try to define “tribes” through certain measurable characteristics, some of which are:

- Group having a territorial affiliation
- Segmental solidarity (socially and structurally similar)
- Economic interdependence (Reciprocal exchange through barter and gifts)
- No surplus generation
- Importance of family and kinship relations (recognition of identity through clan and lineage)
- Use of simple technology
- Resilient to change
- Endogamous, No specialization of function, Common language/ dialect
- Recognize social distance with the other tribes and castes
- Follow tribal traditions, beliefs and customs

This list is not exhaustive but contains some of the important features of the tribes through which one tribe can be differentiated from another.

In context of study and research, tribes have been classified on the basis of the bio-genetic variations, linguistic variability, economy or subsistence strategy, geographical distribution etc. Different methods of study have added to significantly different numerical ascriptions to the total tribal communities of India. Roy Burman (1971, Census Data) reported 427 tribal communities in India whereas the Anthropological Survey of India stated the number as 314. In addition to the above number-crunching, the Tribal Development Division (Government of India, 1978) informed an aggregate of 613 scheduled tribes in India. So, the data is available depending upon the context and purpose of study.

THE FACTORS AFFECTING TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT

Urbanization and Industrialization

It is apparent that the tribal communities being autonomous are highly dependent upon natural resources around them to sustain their life in the harshest zones of the world. Apart from satisfying the basic requirements of these communities, these zones also harbor rich industrial and mineral resources which are turned into economic gains through several governmental and non-governmental industrial projects.

During the British period, the first wake of industrialization in the tribal areas started in Chotanagpur with the exploitation of a coal mining industry in Jharia in Bokaro and Karanpura coal fields in Dhanbad district in 1857, also establishment of the Tata Iron and Steel Factory in Jamshedpur in Singhbhum district in 1907.

After independence, this realization changed into a revolution with identification of new sites comprising of a bulk of profitable resources like mica, coal, iron, copper, bauxite, graphite, asbestos etc. Chotanagpur being rich in such resources, became the target of these industries on a large scale and a huge tribal population was displaced and even lost. Most of the tribal populations of Jharkhand belong to the Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs)-Birhors, Asur, Birjias, Hill Kharias, Korwas, Mal Paharias, Sora Paharias, Paharias and Svans, which practice shifting cultivation or are still at the stage of hunting and gathering, while the remaining tribes-Oraons, Munda, Ho, Kharia, Kisan etc. are agriculturalists. This 'industrial urban explosion' in the middle India comprising regions like Chhotanagpur and neighboring areas of Orissa, including transformation of their tribal identity and assimilation into the global network of trade and industrialization has been termed as "Cultural Mutation" by some eminent anthropologists like V.K.R.V. Rao, Vidyarthi, T.R. Sharma, G. Sarkar etc.

Through detailed studies it has been observed that establishment of industries in the tribal areas has

its own pros and cons. On the one hand it generates employment opportunities and market for development and gains contributing to the national economy, and on the other hand the tribal cultural and personal life is disturbed by introduction of alien practices and encroachments. As their interaction with the other communities increases, they come in contact with the institutions like economy, polity and religion. Some of the tribals who are not able to adjust to the new changes are displaced from their land, and the ones who remain are majorly recruited as the unskilled laborers in the new industrial set up. With the cultural contact, an inclination of tribals towards the urban world increases. They try to imitate their culture by changing their lifestyle and spending exorbitantly on the urban markers which is beyond their capacity. Some of the major transformations noticed are:

Changes in the lifestyle including dressing, modes of entertainment, food etc.

No regulation on the expenditure because of lack of education and awareness about savings

Agriculture based economy turning to market economy

Poverty leading to indebtedness

Disintegration of joint families into nuclear families

Loss of land

Introduction to the outside world and technology

Displacement and migration

Rehabilitation problems

When one region experiences the upsurge of industries, the neighboring areas benefit through increasing trade of their agricultural produce and products to the newly established market. This enhances their economic development.

Socio-Cultural Factors

Like the effects on the other social extents of India, the tribes have also undergone changes in terms of their structure and function, though this change is slow and mostly because of circumstances than acceptance.

The tribal structure which is supposed to be simple and rigid, has observed penetrance of some external elements into their lifestyle which is shifting them more towards a civilized yet complex society. In the Indian sub-continent, due to already existing diversity, there are different compartments of society like religion, economy, power, politics etc. which spans through the "other cultures" to locate where they could be attuned with their community. One such shift is through religion, which finds more potent followers among the socially marginalized tribals, by building contacts with them. This maybe induced by force by capturing their area or by acceptance via increasing trade and infiltration into their domains. The tribal communities are more susceptible to religious conversions because of either ostracism by their own community members or lack of literacy and inability to take alert decisions.

For e.g., in the Chhotanagpur Region, most of the Kharias took to Christianity and were able to gain educational opportunities through the Christian missionaries. They were the ones who were aware of the stipends, scholarships and reservations provided to them, and to which they readily accepted and consequently made their way to the urban areas. Such tribals on migration got socially isolated from their brethren in the rural areas and developed a new way of living. So, the differentials created in this manner diverged one tribe into two parts. Similarly, in one region if the members of a tribe convert to two or more religious sects, there is a socio-cultural barrier created between them which restricts their interaction and creates tension.

The Central and Western regions of India have experienced more diversion of tribes into the Hindu hierarchical system, where they find a place at par with the lower caste tribes/ jatis (*tribe-caste continuum*). Whereas, the North- East region, because of its rugged terrain, allowed enough isolation to its tribes to develop into comparatively distinct communities in terms of culture, beliefs and customs. The introduction of the other religions like Islam, Christianity, and Jainism etc. into their secluded zones brought important changes in their structure.

Forest Policy and Tribals

Forest policies are the governmental inputs to safeguard the interests and protection of the tribes and their natural habitats from over exploitation. Because of different developmental levels of different tribes, their dependency on their natural surroundings varies. A research on same points out that Birhors (PTG) are almost 90% dependent on the forests, whereas this percentage among the Malers (hill cultivators) and other communities like Mundas, Oraons, Hos etc is 60% and 45% respectively. Keeping this in mind, a concrete and uniform policy for all the regions and tribes seems insuperable. As every tribe and its requirement varies, owing to its social, educational, occupational and survival needs, specific policies are required to be framed and implemented at different regional levels.

Before the 19th century, the tribals enjoyed absolute rights over their areas, but when in 1894 the first National Policy on Forest was formulated, the commercial exploitation of the resources started with the state controlling most of its affairs leading to tribal revolts. This exploitation changed to the developmental terms named "industrialization and urbanization" when independence was achieved, again restricting the tribal rights. The New Forest Policy of 1952, recognized 6 vital needs which focused on national development based on deriving resources from the forest and limiting its access to the people including the tribals by levying a grazing fee. The state governments although introduced some resettlement and rehabilitation schemes for the

displaced nomads by arranging tribal colonies with pucca houses and settled occupation base, the tribals inclined to abandon them and return to their old habitats. This led to failure of most of the schemes.

The problem with all the policies as identified by the anthropologists was that the relationship between the forest and tribe was not seriously taken care of. The lacunae lies in absence of optimum compensation provided to the tribals for their land, inadequate wages for their work as laborers, lack of follow up after their departure, connivance between the forest contractors and officials, large scale exploitation and trade of forest resources by the tribals and the non-tribals, establishment of new projects, industries, National Parks and Sanctuaries. In the New Forest Policy of 1988, although the participation of people and tribals was sought along with a recommendation to protect the tribals dominated areas, but still the problems related to tribal welfare are noticed.

Their Conservatism and Reluctance to Change

The tribes being the cultures developed in isolation have devised their own way of living confining themselves to their own set of culture, dialects, people, community and region. Because of this, they have an inclination towards their own people, area and resources and an element of reluctance, mistrust and non-dependence towards any alien agency penetrating their area. This element has intensified over time because of establishment of industries, frauds by the money-lenders and traders, and unfocused and weak government policies.

Even if the government tries to bring some developmental programmes and policies to their area, they tend to be rejected and stalled. Many of the governmental policies framed had lacked understanding of this relationship between the tribes and their lands, which created problems both for the tribes and the officials deployed at their place to monitor the developmental programmes and raged tribal revolts.

THE PROBLEMS OF TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT 3.1. Land- Alienation

Tribes and their territory are considered inseparable in terms of their emotional and ancestral attachment to it. Their land is not only their inhabitation area but also their identity, source of livelihood and responsibility inherited through years of tradition. Any external interference or intrusion have witnessed resistance in the form of tribal revolts and failure of governmental schemes or programmes related to the development of the tribes. One such example is from the Chowra island of Nicobar Archipelago, when the local tribes demolished the water reservoir constructed by PWD as soon as the officials left. They reasoned the act by

stating that the construction would have caused disease and death in the island.

The problem of land-alienation of the tribes in India started with the advent of the British Rule when they appointed the non-tribals as Zamindars in the tribal areas for tax collection, who in turn further recruited the non-tribals for agricultural production in the areas. Later activities like commercial exploitation of forest resources for timber, minerals, water etc. increased the access of traders into the area leading to the concept of "private/ individual property" than the use of land as a "communal property" by tribals. After independence, because of urbanization and industrialization an explosive use of tribal lands started for mining industries, hydel projects, thermal projects etc. This led to the uprooting of tribals from their land, when non-monitoring of their rehabilitation and inadequate compensation added to their difficulties, and illiteracy and lack of skills made their life miserable in novel lands. This affected the trust of the tribals on the socio-political system framing diverse governmental programmes and led to revolts and resistance from them.

The major problem areas lying around the problem of land-alienation includes:

Failure of non-tribal planners in understanding the special relationship between the tribals and their land.

The nature of dispossession of the tribals from their land: political motive, economic motive, religious motive etc.

Increased chances of exploitation of tribals by the traders and money lenders.

Loss of tribal rights over their land through changes in the forest policy.

Inadequate amount of compensation for their land given to tribals.

Displacement and migration issues.

Rehabilitation problem

Ineffective machinery and measures for implementation of legislation and prevention of alienation.

Faulty preparation of the record of rights.

Recruitment of the tribal laborers into cruel working conditions.

Social implications of different patterns of legislations.

Indebtedness

The issue of indebtedness among the tribals of India is in escalation as noticed through a sample survey conducted by the Planning Commission which reports that between 1975 and 1983, the indebtedness increased from 14.47% to 33.77%, with the debt liability per household increasing from ₹419 (1975-76) to ₹819 (1982-83). According to the 1961 Census conducted over 78 tribal villages of different states, it was seen that more than 50% of the households in 30 villages surveyed were very

highly indebted, whereas only below 5% households in 1 village was very low in indebtedness (Vidyarthi, 1976:441)

The main reasons for indebtedness can be listed as:

Poor income gnorance of equitable price system
xtravagant expenditure on large scale social celebrations, festivals and occasions like marriages, birth and death

Adherence to the panchayat decisions regarding fines for fear of excommunication

The tribal economy is characterized by the subsistence economy marred by the problems of illiteracy and unemployment. Even where the employment is present, the wages are so meagre that running a household from that amount becomes difficult. With the increase of tribal population after independence, the problem has aggravated as in accordance with the population the land yield has not increased. In such a situation, when the performance of the traditional rituals like initiating ceremonies comes forth, the tribals have to be dependent on one of the following two sources:

Organized/ Institutional Sources (Banks, Cooperative Societies etc.)

Unorganized sources (private money lenders, shopkeepers. friends and relatives)

But, because of the complications in the organized sector process, the tribals get trapped in the loan and consequently in the huge interest repayment cycle of the money-lenders, which they are not able to pay owing to their poor condition. This cycle continues from one generation to the other, and the family has to not only repay the loan but have to work like a bondage labor in most of the cases, where they are bound to perform the duties as slaves for their masters without any payment. This system of bondage labor is known by different names in different states, for e.g., *Jana manjhi/ ijhari* in the Poonch region of Jammu and Kashmir, *Vet/Begar* among the tribes of Dhorkoli, Katkari, Worli and Bhil of Thana and Nasik districts of Maharashtra and among the Paniyans of Wyanad and Taluk and Gudlar Taluk of Nilgiri of Tamil Nadu, this system is known as *Begar*. The local names for the loan system in India are: *Sagri* in Rajasthan, *Gothi* in Orissa, *Vetti* in Andhra Pradesh, *Jeetha* in Mysore, *Naukri Nama* and *Mahadari* in Madhya Pradesh.

Except in the North-East India, the loan relationship is generally between a tribal and a non-tribal. The various governmental legislations have failed in eradicating indebtedness among tribals because:

The entire population is not covered

The extent of practice in different states is unknown

The word bonded labor has not been well defined

Lack of machinery to enforce these orders

Cases of bonded labor not reported mostly because of their socio-economic background and lack of knowledge

Financial Constraints for the developmental projects

Identity-Crisis

The tribes of India which represents a relatively isolated group, faces the problem of identity-crisis, paradoxically when they have gotten different representations by different cultures, scholars and themselves. This is probably the result of an amalgamation of different cultures at different junctions of space and time, when their existence uses a defined nomenclature for their representation and hence parting from a true cultural identity. For example, the use of the term “*aborigines*” or “*primitive*” denotes a “sympathetic identity for differentiation” where they are differentiated from the dominant Hindu caste from above; another term “*backward Hindus*” or “*Vanvasi*” denotes a “sympathetic identity for acculturation” or “assimilation” of the similar culture like Hindus; another term “*Scheduled tribes*” or “*Anusuchit Janjati*” denotes a “sympathetic identity for nationalism” which is a constitutional representation standing for safeguarding their rights and interests and at last the term “*Adivasi*” which represents a fully autonomous and historically contextualized “self-experienced identity of sub-nationalism”. In this mayhem of cultural denotation, a tribal tries to identify his own identity varying in perspective from person to person.

In addition to this, other factors like “*tribe-caste continuum*” where there is a tendency of tribes to assimilate some of the cultural features of the Hindus by continuous interaction with the caste groups and attaining a caste status like them, or vice versa as according to N.K. Bose’s (1953), “Hindu method of tribal assimilation”, leads to a shift in the traditionally established identity of a displaced or regionally infiltrated tribal, whose self lies between the bipolar categories. This gives rise to the tribal movements where a tribal community tries to identify itself with the dominant wider Hindu social system, or maintain group solidarity and identify itself by preserving its traditional culture mostly by symbolic revival of its atypical traditional tribal culture, which might include a demand for a separate state etc. The other reasons for a lost tribal identity includes modernization.

Poor literacy and education

An important index of development is the estimate of the literacy and education level of an area. It imparts social cognition and ability to comprehend their social, political and cultural environment better. It is a catalyst for the social upliftment promoting the importance of health,

nutrition, savings, employment, hygiene and personal and community growth. As per the 2001 Census, the literacy rate among the Scheduled tribes was recorded as 47.10% with the females of the tribes of Bihar accounting for the lowest 15.54%. The data shows that the literacy rate among the STs was lowest in Bihar (28.17%) and the highest in Mizoram (89.34%). Even among the tribes of India, the dispersion of literacy is not uniform. For example, In Bihar, the Oraons and Mundas are educated but the Birhors, Asurs and many other numerically small tribal groups are the least educated.

Over the years, illiteracy and lack of education has proved to be the major cause of most of the tribal problems including land alienation, indebtedness, exploitation by money lenders, unemployment etc. The major issues felt with the non-attainment of the literacy level in tribal areas includes:

Remoteness of the schools and institutions

Poor livelihood means

Inadequate facility and quality of schools

Language and cultural barriers

Unavailability and unwillingness of teachers to teach in remote and tribal areas

Lack of vocational training

The schedule and vacations of schools doesn’t match the period of important tribal festivals

As a result either the enrollment of the children is low or there are high numbers of drop outs. Some of the important factors for such a slow growth of literacy in tribal India are:

a. Poor Economic Conditions: Although most of the tribals in our country are agriculturists and pastorals, their economic status lies at the subsistence level. In this condition it is hard to manage livelihood and education simultaneously, unless it is imparted with the help of missionaries or the provisions of the Central and State governments. For most of the tribals, their children are the bread earners and sustenance regulators of their family, especially when they belong to the occupational group of the hunter-gatherers, shifting cultivators and pastoralists. So, they discourage them from spending more time in school. This can be attributed to the lack of awareness among the tribals on the importance of education.

b. Socio-cultural Factors: Among the various socio-cultural factors, the important ones responsible for poor education in India is gender bias, threat of family splitting and cultural traits infused from an early age. If the community accepts the education of the children, the boys are preferred in comparison to the girls. This is because either they are considered to be the property of their husbands, or they are married at an early age, or their education

makes them ineligible to find a comparable husband in future. The other social factors includes certain customs like the practice of polyandry among the Khasas of Jaunsar Bhawar region of Dehradun, who because of the fear that their male members would leave this practice on getting educated and leave their household, do not send them to schools. Similarly, the problems like intoxication, violence etc. are other reasons why the tribal children lose interest in going to schools.

c. Other Factors: The other factors includes the lack of infrastructure in schools, mismanagement, lack of implementation of the policies and reservations at the school level, absenteeism of teachers and children, engagement of children more in their cultural and social events, long distance between the school and village etc.

Unemployment

The major reasons for unemployment among the tribals of India is illiteracy, addiction to alcohol, and several other social and cultural factors. Though the government has providing them reservation and provision against discrimination, most of the reserved seats remain vacant because of lack of eligibility for the position or unawareness among the tribals.

Displacement and Rehabilitation

The rapid establishment of industries and modern infrastructure, requires land and resources which are generally sought from the forest areas. These being the inhabitation areas of the tribals, are disturbed with such a penetration, making the tribals leave their land and hence identity to a new place where they have no knowledge about the people and resources and their illiteracy and lack of skills adds to their obstructions. With the declaration of the second five year plan by Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, the need for establishment of industries for gaining self-sufficiency was realized. So, big industries like Heavy Engineering Corporation in Ranchi, Bokaro Steel City in Bihar, Durgapur Steel Plant in West Bengal, Bhilai Steel Plant in Madhya Pradesh and Rourkela Steel Plant in Orissa were started. These are majorly the tribal occupied areas which led to their uprooting from their natural habitat without adequate compensation, failure of their resettlement, discouragement of shifting cultivation and nomadism by the government and preference to the settled subsistence mode like agriculture. According to L.P. Vidyarthi, because of ignorance of the '*Nature-Man-Spirit Complex*', the tribals revolt and many of the governmental projects are discarded or kept on hold leading to stalling of a large amount of funds.

Health, Nutrition and Hygiene

One of the major problems among the tribals is the one created by them and lack of effective research

and policies- i.e., lack of health, nutrition and hygiene. The major reasons for the poor health among the tribals includes:

- Lack of personal hygiene and sanitation
- Tobacco and alcohol consumption from an early age
- Early marriage
- Absence of effective waste disposal
- Lack of family planning. Early child birth
- Lack of ventilation in living place (overcrowding and congestion)
- Paucity of clean drinking water
- Lack of immunization and medical facilities
- Illiteracy and lack of awareness
- Superstitions
- Low consumption of important dietary products like meat, fish, egg, milk etc

The problem is manifested in different forms like malnutrition, frequent abortions, and fatal microbial and pest diseases leading to low life expectancy among the tribals.

Other Problems

The other problems as L.P. Vidyarthi pointed are at the level of polity, implementation and recruitment and training of personnel. The reasons of poor impact can be listed as:

- Lack of special attention to tribal and scheduled areas in spite of constitutional provisions.
- Inadequate allotment of funds in both general and special sectors to cover all aspects of tribal development.
- Lack of co-ordination and integration between the sectorial programmes and departments both at the Centre and State level.
- Ineffective personnel policy of the government, e.g., high transfer rate of monitoring professionals, inadequate incentives, lack of specialized training in tribal cultures and lack of social service spirit in them.
- Lack of scientific planning and research.
- Politicization of the tribal issues and failure on the part of tribal societies to erect dedicated and enlightened social representatives.

THE POSSIBLE AND PROBABLE REMEDIES a) Land Alienation:

To curb the problem several remedial steps were taken at the centre and state level, although they were helpful, but the problem is still noticed. The reason can be attributed to the flaws in the laws or the deficiency at the level of implementation. As land alienation is a complex problem just the administrative and legislative measures are not sufficient to perform either a developmental activity in their region or to measure the requisite compensation required for their rehabilitation and

upliftment in society. Some of the important land regulations implemented to reduce land alienation includes:

Assam Land and Revenue Regulation (Amendment) Act, 1964
 Bihar Scheduled Area Regulation, 1969
 Land Revenue (Amendment) Rule, 1960 (Karnataka)
 Kerala Land Assignment Rules, 1964
 Land Revenue Code, 1959 (Section 165) of Madhya Pradesh and 1966 (Section 36) of Maharashtra
 Orissa Scheduled Areas- Transfer of Immovable Property (by ST) Regulation, 1959 (Amendment-1965)
 Rajasthan Tenancy Act, 1955 (Section 42, 43, 46A and 49A) etc.

Along with this, in the year 1975-76, all state governments took bold steps to eradicate land-alienation followed by framing several acts. Constitutional protection under the 9th Schedule has many provisions related to the Land Reform Acts. The concept of tribal entrepreneurship is also emerging which is opening ways for the tribals to be economically and socially independent.

Other possible solutions can be: providing rehabilitation subsidy, assistance to adjust to the new situation, share in profits that are generated through their land and resources, replacing the concept of compensation by time bound development premium, promoting their participation in the decision making process, increasing social consciousness through literacy and mobilization of public opinion through massive programmes, provision of governmental aid in legal fights, access to easy loan and banking facility etc. It has to be understood from the perspective of the tribals, how important is their land and resource for their sustenance. It is a two way process for a tribal in which on the one hand his ownership rights over the land are removed and on the other, subject to the positive output of the governmental plans and policies, he gains social power and economic efficiency. But, in most of the cases due to lacunae in the plan and the process, the burden of land projects is borne by the tribals.

b) Indebtedness:

Though there are loopholes in the existing money lending laws and lack of awareness about the legal sources of financial help and assistance, but some areas can still be worked upon to improve the condition of indebtedness among the tribals:

Provision of alternative credit facilities to the tribals for long-term, short-term and medium-term basis.

The process for procuring and repayment of loans must be made simple with low interest rates.

The Bonded Labor System (Abolition) Act, 1976, along with the rehabilitation scheme for released bonded labor was implemented with force, but because of lack of administrative will and laxity, the act turned out to be weak.

Similarly, individual bondage abolishment acts like Sagri System Abolition Act, 1961 (Rajasthan), the Andhra Pradesh (Scheduled Tribal) Debt Relief Regulation, 1960 – Amendment 1970, Bihar Scheduled Area Regulation, 1969 and Madhya Pradesh Scheduled Tribe Debt Relief Regulation, 1965 were implemented.

c) Identity-Crisis:

The constitutional provisions of reservations and protection from discrimination have helped the tribal communities to identify themselves at par with the majority of the people of India. Tribal culture shift is a continuous and gradual process, and there is complete freedom on the part of a tribesman to choose where he wants to identify himself.

d) Poor literacy and Education:

To meet the challenges of illiteracy in India, several suggestions have been forwarded to the governmental bodies, some of which are: adequate provision of science, mathematics and language teachers, placement in vocational education, granting scholarships to the tribal children, promoting interest in sports, prioritizing girls' education, providing access to resourceful library, training them in tribal culture, crafts and cuisine, revising the holidays with respect to different tribal areas, providing residential school facilities and easy transportation to the students and staff.

After independence, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar piloted the framework of the Constitution of India, where he included certain safeguards for the protection and promotion of the rights of SCs and STs. The Article 45 of the Constitution made it compulsory for the states to ensure "free and compulsory education for all children until they completed the age of fourteen years". The National Policy on Education, 1986 was reviewed and recommended by the the Acharya Ramamurthy Committee to make education relevant and more meaningful to the tribals. But the situation has not improved as per the expectations. Some of the measures which can be taken includes school on wheels- which can bring the school facilities close to the children living in forests, provision of mid-day meals, ashram schools, night schools- which may encourage students work in the morning and study in the night and most importantly organizing education awareness programmes in their area to create a will from their end in sending their children to schools.

e) Unemployment:

The Article 16(4) and 335 of the Constitution of India provides safeguards to ensure the representation of the SCs and STs in services and posts. Their reservation has been extended to public sector enterprises, nationalized banks etc. A special recruitment drive recommended by the commissioner for SCs and STs was started in 1988,

which helped in increasing the employment among the tribal communities.

f) Displacement and Rehabilitation:

To control the problem of displacement and rehabilitation of the tribals, government of India took several steps like focusing on the sustainable development, promoting the building of pucca houses for the nomads, and confiding their rights to some extent in their forest lands. The formation of Indigenous Forest Groups to look after the problems of the indigenous population or autochthones, has worked in different countries and is recognized by the International Labor Organization (ILO). Though so many policies have been framed and reframed for the protection of tribals, their agony still goes unnoticed in the eyes of the industrialists.

g) Health, Nutrition and Hygiene:

Some of the suggested remedial measures for targeting the problem of health, nutrition and hygiene of the tribals includes:

Improving the living standards of the tribals by building a sustainable economic infrastructure without disturbing their economy

Increasing literacy level

Ensuring availability of clean drinking water

Control on excessive alcohol and tobacco consumption

Providing easy medical facilities

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