

Perception of PVTGs towards Implementation of various Government Schemes in Nilgiris

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Abstract

Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) are Tribal people found all over the nation and their development is an overall upliftment of the tribal people to reach the main streams at different levels. The development includes not only protection but also improvement in terms of health, employment, transportation, education, etc. Due to their distinctive characters, cultures, religions, habitations, etc. implementation of time bound and phased manner development programmes and schemes according to their need is very useful and important. Hence the present study is made to analyze the perception of PVTGs towards the various government schemes that are being enacted from time to time for their socio-economic development.

Keywords: *Particularly Vulnerable Tribal groups (PVTGs), Upliftment, and Socio-Economic Development.*

Introduction

According to 2011 Census, India's population reached 1.21 billion; the population of scheduled tribes in India constitutes 104,281,034 and is about 8.61 per cent of the total population. Among them, 89.97 per cent live in rural areas and 10.03 per cent in urban areas.¹Lakshadweep has the highest tribal population with 94.8 per cent; it only constitutes 0.058 per cent of India's tribal population. Almost all the people living in Mizoram are tribal, it reaches 94.4 per cent of its total population, and the tribal population of Mizoram represents 0.99 per cent of the Country's tribal population. The Scheduled Tribes are notified in 30 States or UTs and the number of individual ethnic groups, etc. notified as Scheduled Tribes is 705 in number. The tribal people in India are mostly backward, deprived and oppressed sections of Indian society. Article 366 (25) of the Constitution of India identified such tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within such tribes or tribal communities as scheduled tribes. According to the Constitution Article 342, the President of India may specify the tribes after consultation with the Governor by making public notification is deemed to be scheduled tribes in relation to that State or Union Territory. Tribal development is an overall upliftment of the tribal people to reach the mainstreams at different levels. Tribal people in India need to develop their socio-cultural life and economic situation. They also need protection from abuse and exploitation by other advanced people. Tribal development includes not only protection but also improvement in terms of health, employment, transportation, education, etc. Due to their distinctive characters, cultures, religions, habitations, etc. implementation of time bound and phased manner development programmes and schemes according to their need is very useful and important.

¹ C. Chandramouli (2013), *Census of India 2011*, Scheduled Tribes in India as revealed in Census 2011, Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi, p.3

Tribal Developments after independence

The Concept of Schedule Tribe

Under the constitution of India certain tribes have been listed as the Scheduled Tribes. Only those tribes which have been included in the list of scheduled Tribes are extended the facility of reservations in legislatures and government jobs. Certain tribes, for instance, some nomadic tribes are not specified as Scheduled Tribes. The constitution neither defines nor lays down any criteria for specifying the Scheduled Tribes. As per Article 366 (25) of the constitution, the Scheduled Tribe means such tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 to be Scheduled Tribes for the purposes of this constitution. The Scheduled Tribes are declared specified by the President under Article 342 through public notification. The parliament may, by law, include or exclude from the list of Scheduled Tribes any tribal community or part thereof in any State or Union Territory. There is no religious bar for specifying a tribe as a Scheduled Tribe.

The main criteria adopted for specifying communities as the Scheduled Tribes include

- (i) Traditional occupational economy and pattern of a tribe in a definite geographical area
- (ii) Distinctive culture which includes whole spectrum of tribal way of life i.e., languages, customs, traditions, religious beliefs, arts and crafts, etc., and
- (iii) Lack of educational and techno- economic P development. i.e, In post independence period grouping together of a number of tribal communities as the Scheduled Tribes in the constitution is a significant achievement.

It has helped in consolidation' of their position as a distinct ethnic, linguistic and cultural entity. All the tribes which exist in our country are not acknowledged as Scheduled Tribe. Our policy makers have laid down some criteria for declaring a tribe as a Scheduled Tribe. Though, there is a provision in the constitution that new names could be added or deleted from this list depending on satisfying these norms. However, this facility has not been used effectively so far. This has resulted to a situation where some deserving tribes are still not getting their share of protection and incentives.

Constitutional Safeguards

Our constitution provides a number of provisions to ensure development and protection to tribal culture and society. The basic idea behind these was to ensure state support for less privileged actions of society. By providing reservations in legislatures and government jobs their participation in the affairs of the state was ensured. The constitutional provisions for the upliftment of tribes may be divided into two parts 1) Protective, and 2) Developmental. Provisions for the administration of the tribal areas of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram are made in the 6th schedule of the constitution. While scheduled tribes inhabiting other states other than

Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram are dealt with in the 5th Schedule. The provisions made in the 5th Schedule are:

- i) Tribes Advisory Councils are to be constituted to give advice on welfare and advancement of the Scheduled Tribes in the States as may be referred to them by the Governor". [Schedule V, Para 41]
- ii) The Governor is also authorized to make regulations to prohibit or restrict the transfer of land by or among members of, the Scheduled Tribes, regulate the allotment of land, and regulate the business of money lending." [Schedule V, para 51]

The 6th Schedule provides, Tribal areas [of Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura are to be administered as autonomous districts. Provision is made for the creation of District Councils and Regional Councils for the exercise of certain legislative and judicial functions. These councils are primarily representative bodies and they have got the power of law-making in certain specified fields." [Schedule M]

Article 15(4): Promotion of Social, Economic and Educational interests: This article empowers the state to make any special provision for the advancement of socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes". This clause has been especially incorporated to prevent any special provision made by a state for the advancement of socially or educationally backward classes of citizens from being challenged in the law courts on the ground of discrimination.

Article 16(4): Reservation in Posts and Services: This clause empowers the state to "reserve any post or appointment in favour of any backward class or citizens, who in the opinion of the state are not adequately represented in the services under the state." The state is expected to reserve reasonable percentage of available jobs for the backward classes. However, there is nothing to prevent a member of a backward class for competing with general category people and to be appointed to non-reserved posts if selected.

Article 19(5): Safeguard of Tribal Interests: While the rights of Free movement and residence throughout the territory of India and of acquisition and disposition of property are guaranteed to every citizen, special restrictions may be imposed by 'the state for the protection of the interests of any Scheduled Tribe". (For example state may impose restrictions on owning property by non tribals in tribal areas.)

Article 23: "Traffic in human beings, beggars and other similar forms of forced labour are prohibited ". This is a very significant provision so far as Scheduled Tribes are concerned.

Article 29: Cultural and Educational Rights: According to this article a cultural or linguistic minority has right to conserve its language or culture. The state shall not impose upon it any culture other than the community's own culture."

Article 164: It provides for a Minister-in-charge of tribal welfare in the states of Bihar, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh. These states have substantial tribal population and special provision of a

Minister looking after tribal welfare is an evidence of the concern of the framers of the constitution for safeguarding the interests of Scheduled Tribes.

Articles 330, 332 and 334: According to these articles seats shall be reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in legislative bodies. There are provisions for reservations of seats in the parliament as well as legislative Assembly of every state. Such reservations were cease to be effective after a period of 10 years from the commencement of the constitution (Article 334) but after every ten years are being extended through constitutional amendments.

Article 335: "The claims of the members of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes shall be taken into consideration in making the appointments to services and posts in connection with the affairs of the Union or of a State."

Article 338: It says that there shall be a special officer for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to be appointed by the President. It shall be the duty of the special officer (designated Commissioner) to investigate all matters relating to the safeguards provided to them under the constitution and to report to the President upon the working of those safeguards at such intervals as the President may direct, and the President shall cause all reports to be laid before each House of Parliament.

Article 339(1): The President may at any time and shall at the expiration of 10 years from the commencement of the constitution by order appoint a Commission to report on the administration of Scheduled areas and the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes in the states.

Article 371(A, B, C): Provides for the special measures and provisions with respect to the states of Maharashtra and Gujarat (371), Nagaland (371 A), Assam (371 B), and Manipur (371 C). Besides, provisions are also made (as discussed above) in the fifth and the sixth Schedule of the constitution regarding the administration of the tribal areas.

Tribal communities are often identified by some specific signs such as primitive traits, distinctive culture, geographical isolation, shyness to contact with the community at large and backwardness. Along with these, some tribal groups have some specific features such as dependency on hunting, gathering for food, having pre-agriculture level of technology, zero or negative growth of population and extremely low level of literacy. These groups are called Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups.

Problem statement

After independence, a secular constitution was adopted to govern the country. Several constitutional provisions were made for the development of tribe. Many schemes of development were formulated and implemented. Several schemes of tribal development are still active through several five year plans in India. Attempts have been made to make the scheduled tribes to develop socially, educationally, economically, politically and culturally. For the development of tribes, various models, approaches and theories of development have been propounded in different five-

year plan periods. But over the years, it has been experienced that Government's efforts to draw the PVTGs from subsistence economy into the wider economic framework of the country through legislative protection and socioeconomic programmes have not met with much success. In real life, severe poverty, undernourishment and hunger are very common among many PVTGs living within the country. Though PVTGs have their own cultural uniqueness, they have faced problems from other general people. Hence, there is a need to have a study on perception of PVTGs towards various schemes in the Nilgiris District.

Review of literature

Krittibas Datta (2021) explores the implementation of government sponsored programmes on tribes in Mal Block, Jalpaiguri District of West Bengal. He opined that programmes have a goal to develop the beneficiary through providing some facility with the help of local Implementing agency. He concludes that all the government sponsor schemes have not achieved the full goal specially the tribes in this area and also suggested that the socio-economic development of tribal households with the government schemes benefit can increase through active participation of the local political leaders and NGOs. **Rajkumar Velusamy V(2021)** articulated that Education and literacy are potent indicators of social and economic development and the inner strength of tribal communities. He further added that tribal development has been a significant concern of the government, voluntary organizations, NGOs, and social reformers.

Iqbal et. al., (2020) have conducted a study to find out the constraints faced by Gujjars and Bakerwalas in availing the benefits of tribal developmental schemes in Jammu division of Jammu and Kashmir State. He states that although several tribal development programmes and policies have been implemented in the tribal area for the improvement of socio-economic conditions of the tribal till date, they are still in the last ladder of the development. Poverty, insufficient awareness and lack of organized efforts seem to be the root cause of socio-economic backwardness and major problems of the scheduled tribe.

Objective of the study

The objective of the study is;

1. To examine the perception of PVTGs towards implementation of various government schemes in Nilgiris.

Hypotheses of the study

H₀₁: There is no significant association between perception of beneficiaries towards government schemes and their demographic profile

Research Methodology

The study is both analytical and descriptive in nature. Primary data has been used in this study. Primary data will be collected using interview schedule from the selected respondents. The population targeted for this study consisted of respondents who are the PVTG beneficiaries of various developmental schemes in Nilgiri district of Tamilnadu. Amongst a total of 4527 beneficiaries distributed over six taluks namely Udthagamandalam, Coonoor, Panthalur, Kotagiri, Gudalur, and Kundah, 450 samples are being chosen adopting stratified random sampling with Nilgiris District as that of the universe, taluks the stratum, village as the primary unit of sampling, and PVTG beneficiaries as the ultimate unit.

Limitations of the study

The following are the limitations of the study;

1. This research was location specific and was confined to the Nilgiris district in India. Hence the results of this research may not be applicable to other parts of globe.
2. Only the PVTG beneficiaries are covered in the study and not anyone else from any other developmental schemes are included.

Analysis and discussion

Table 1: Demographic Profile of PVTGs

S. No.	Factors	Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Age	Below 30 years	97	21.6
		31 – 40 years	163	36.2
		41 – 50 years	132	29.3
		Above 50 years	58	12.9
	TOTAL		450	100
2	Gender	Male	342	76.0
		Female	108	24.0
	TOTAL		450	100
3	Marital Status	Married	366	81.3
		Single	84	18.7
	TOTAL		450	100
4	Nature of family	Nuclear family	314	69.8
		Joint Family	136	30.2
	TOTAL		450	100
		Illiterate	100	22.2

5	Educational Qualification	School level	189	42.0
		Graduate	58	12.9
		Diploma/Others	103	22.9
TOTAL			450	100
6	Number of members in the family	Two	124	27.6
		Three	143	31.8
		Four	92	20.4
		More than four	91	20.2
TOTAL			450	100
7	Number of earning members in the family	One	138	30.7
		Two	219	48.7
		Three	73	16.2
		More than three	20	4.4
TOTAL			450	100
8	Occupation	Agriculture	106	23.6
		Wages	183	40.7
		Self employed	58	12.9
		Others	103	22.9
TOTAL			450	100
9	Income	Below Rs. 10,000	144	32.0
		Rs.10001 – 20,000	167	37.1
		Rs.20,001 – 30,000	79	17.6
		Above Rs. 30,000	60	13.3
TOTAL			450	100
10	Residential Area	Rural	258	57.3
		Urban	121	26.9
		Semi-urban	71	15.8
TOTAL			450	100

Source: Primary data

The demographic profile of the PVTGs is presented in Table 1. It can be concluded from the table that majority (36.2 per cent) of the respondents were 31-40 years of age, 24.0 per cent of the respondents were male, 81.3 per cent of the respondents are married, 42.0 per cent of the respondents had completed their school level education, 69.8 per cent of the respondents are belonging to nuclear family, 31.8 per cent of the respondents had three members in the family, 48.7 per cent of the respondents had two earning members in the family, 40.7 per cent of the respondents were wagers, 37.1 per cent of the respondents had the income between Rs.20,001-30,000 and 57.3 per cent of the respondents were in rural area.

Table 2: PVTGs' Perception towards government schemes

S. No	Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
1	The steps involved in applying to the scheme is complex	35	20	71	159	165	450
2	Wide information is available to read before applying.	16	19	89	236	90	450
3	The cooperation from the staff at the time of applying for the scheme is satisfactory	6	19	116	183	126	450
4	The information pertaining to requirements of relevant document is sufficient	7	24	122	211	86	450
5	The time taken for verification process for the scheme is very less	14	33	106	208	89	450
6	The scheme and its contribution is proven to be beneficial at the time of unemployment due to varied reasons	21	20	109	208	92	450
7	The scheme have brought the changes in income of the family	16	12	137	190	95	450
8	The scheme have developed the habit of savings among the beneficiaries	13	24	106	225	82	450
9	The scheme, over the period of time has brought changes into the family's asset	15	24	96	207	108	450
10	Government schemes benefits in all aspects for the beneficiaries	10	18	108	215	99	450
11	The scheme helps in employment generation and contributes for the GDP growth to some extent	15	24	102	213	96	450
12	The voluntary organisation of the scheme helps to obtain benefits to a large extent	2	13	97	195	143	450
13	The schemes provides for the improvement in socio economic condition of the region	9	20	92	219	110	450
14	The people registered with the scheme may use the loan for some other purposes	16	30	99	182	123	450

Source: Primary data

The table 2 presents the perception of beneficiaries towards government schemes. The statements are shown rating the level of benefit as strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree. It is inferred from the table that 165 respondents ranked strongly agree in the steps involved in applying to the scheme is complex, 236 respondents ranked agree that wide information is available to read before applying, 183 respondents ranked agree that cooperation from the staff at the time of applying for the scheme is satisfactory, 211 respondents ranked agree about the information pertaining to requirements of relevant document is sufficient, 208 respondents ranked agree for the time taken for verification process for the scheme is very less, 208 respondents ranked agree for the scheme and its contribution is proven to be beneficial at the time of unemployment due to varied reasons, 190 respondents ranked agree to the scheme have brought the changes in income of the family, 225 respondents ranked agree that the scheme

have developed the habit of savings among the beneficiaries, 207 respondents ranked agree the scheme, over the period of time has brought changes into the family's asset, 215 respondents ranked agree that Government schemes benefits in all aspects for the beneficiaries, 213 respondents ranked agree that the scheme helps in employment generation and contributes for the GDP growth to some extent, 195 respondents ranked agree that voluntary organisation of the scheme helps to obtain benefits to a large extent, 219 respondents ranked agree that the schemes provides for the improvement in socioeconomic condition of the region and 182 respondents ranked agree that the people had registered with the scheme may use the loan for some other purposes.

Analysis of association between the perception of PVTGs towards government schemes and their demographic profile

H₀₁: There is no significant association between perception of PVTGs towards government schemes and their demographic profile

Table 3: Chi-Square

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	χ^2	p
Age	Perception	16.83	.02*
Gender	Perception	3.30	.00**
Marital status	Perception	2.05	.72
Nature of family	Perception	8.96	.00**
Education	Perception	4.24	.00**
Number of members in the family	Perception	21.68	.04*
Number of earning members	Perception	15.27	.22
Occupation	Perception	12.65	.04*
Income	Perception	6.03	.01*
Residential area	Perception	5.54	.03*

Source: Primary data (* 5 per cent level of significance & ** 1 per cent level of significance)

The table 3 depicts the chi square model between the perception of PVTGs towards government schemes and their demographic profile. It is conferred from the table that the Chi square value between age, gender, nature of family, education, number of members in the family, occupation, income and residential area with the perception is significant. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and concluded that there is a significant association between perception of PVTGs towards government schemes and their demographic profile via; age, gender, marital

status, and nature of family, number of earning members in the family, income and residential area.

Suggestion

1. Amidst the recurring emphasis by the government that the PVTGs would be made to develop in all aspects, it is observed that the benefits are not made to reach the ultimately vulnerable section of the groups. So the enumerators may be appointed to identify the real groups in need of benefits.
2. It was even found that the benefits financially provided were inadequate. Their investment requirements are not met with the assistances provided. Hence, the assessment of requirements should be carried out before granting benefits.
3. The awareness and efforts would be put by the officials to educate the PVTGs to avoid the misuse of funds.

Conclusion

Planning is generally accepted in many developing countries as an indispensable means to promote development. The preference for it arose out of the inability of the poor and traditional societies to imitate and promote development process on the one hand and the desire of the state to put an immediate end to human sufferings on the other, the preparation and implementation of the plans of development in these countries respect the acceptance of the responsibility of development on the part of the states. During the process of planning for development in these countries some new problems have emerged and the existing ones have assumed new dimensions leading to significant changes in the concept and strategies of planning and development. In India, planning processes are being implemented for over six decades. Tribes encounter socio-economic, cultural and political problems. They are considered as a weaker section of the society. Hence, efforts must be taken while planning for the welfare of the tribal people, as most of them are unaware of the schemes that are proposed by the government from time to time.

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