INTRODUCTION
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Mankind is proceeding towards greater and greater homogeneity-racially, culturally and linguistically. This march encompasses a variety of dimensions and some agonising implications. Oldest cultures are either dying or being exterminated. In such a broad category come a great segment of humanity known by a bewildering variety of names such as primitive, tribal, indigenous, aboriginal, native and so on. Some major characteristics of these groups have been simple, pre-machine economy, unsophisticated rituals and social customs, lack of a script for their speech which itself isn’t developed, small local community organisation and homogeneity.

In India, for thousand of years, primitive tribes persisted in forest and hills without having more than casual contacts with the population of the open plains and the centre of civilisation. According to Heimendorf (1977), co-existence was possible because there was on the whole, no pressure of population and the advanced communities didn’t feel any urge to impose their own values on people placed patently outside the orbit of Hindu civilisation. Not until the British appeared on the stage of Indian history and consolidated their position in the country was any stir felt and experienced in the midst of these people. Such stir was slowly and steadily brought about by several factors in accordance with the colonial needs and aspiration of the British rulers. The colonial rulers, for obvious reasons, had to ‘open up’ the entire country to be able to rule effectively and intensively. They were left with no other option but to evolve eventually an effective and extensive communication system including
postal, telegraphic, roadways and railways services. Also for long, at least up to 1887, there remained the primary obligation of British mercantile colonialism. To make the military conquest as complete as possible from one end of the country to other. This called for, internally a political and military policy that demanded maintenance of a strong thrust into all the resistance areas including the forest depths and hillsides and hilltops.

S.C Dube (1972) supports this assertion by saying that in respect of law and order the British rulers had maintained a stern posture throughout their sojourn in India, and even in tribal areas they enforced them with an iron hand. Their attitude to the tribes otherwise was paternalistic and protective. A money economy was introduced among the tribal communities. This was not terrifying in itself but what came to disturb the tribals most was the land hunger of the non-British vested interests. “Taking advantage of their vantage position they started acquiring lands and introducing cash cropping through means foul rather than fair lands that belong to and were used by local communities. Ultimately this land hunger affected not only their agriculture but also their hunting and fishing rights” (Nihar Ranjan Ray: 1989). Still the friction between the tribals and the non-tribals was limited to a restricted scale due to the British policy of exclusion of partial exclusion of tribal areas, which kept the economic competition between the tribals and the non-tribal to minimum. Indirectly, it also helped the tribes to pursue their distinctive lifestyles relatively undisturbed. Though Christian missionaries of various shades were allowed to access to these areas yet their influence was restricted to the north-eastern region and some
areas of central India. S.C. Dube summarizes the situation in a realistic way by commenting that culture change did come about but in driblets. Unsupported by dynamic and purposeful social action, this policy resulted in perpetuation of primitiveness. The tribes, thus, were precluded from having a foretaste or even a vision of things that go into raising the standards of living and in adding to material comfort and well-being. Their isolation from the main currents of Indian life helped the tribes in preserving their traditions, but at the same time it also hindered the growth of competence in them to face growing competition in a wider society and to meet some of the challenges of the contemporary world. They couldn’t cope with the modern economic system and were trapped in the vicious circle of exploitation at the hands of the land hungry peasantry and the blood sucking moneylenders. The rapidly increasing interference and exploitation resulted in classes and bloody uprisings that still continues, though in different forms.

Despite numerous uprisings, social movements and participation in the freedom struggle, though on a restricted scale, the tribal people remained at the periphery of consciousness of the average Indian masses. They were hardly ever taken note of by our social and political thinkers and leaders of even the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. Nihar Ranjan Ray (1972) remarks that the attention of the Indian National Congress was never drawn to this growing socio-political problem, though the question of the lower and depressed order and the untouchables of Hindu society had started receiving attention from about the 1880’s. Not until Gandhiji entered the scene was this
matter looked at as national issues. His concern for the Adivasi or Adimjati gave a new awakening to our national leadership.

After Gandhiji, among our modern national leadership, Jawaharlal Nehru was a vociferous champion of the tribals. He has been most outspoken in condemning the imposition of the Hindu way of living on tribal communities reared in other traditions but he couldn’t restrain the so-called reformers from their chosen task of civilising the tribal people. Logically, as long as Muslims, Christians and Parsis are free to follow their traditional ways of life, the tribal communities should also enjoy their natural right to follow their social system, howsoever, distinct it might be from that of the majority community. Nobody has got the might to convert the tribal people into carbon copies of any model.

Free India is committed to the welfare and development of the tribal people in a special way. The tribal people have awakened from their centuries old slumber. In the words of Verrier Elwin, “roads are everywhere urging their ways into places which have hitherto been virtually inaccessible. Education, as it spreads, is revolutionizing the social and economic conditions of the tribal villages and is creating new skills”. The most important fact that we have come to face is the effect of changes of every kind that are sweeping across the hills and forest in India-changes initiated by people, government and by the tribes themselves. The distinction of tribes in the sense that their roots in the soil date back to a very early period; they live in the relative isolation of the hills and the forests; their sense of history is shallow, for among them, the remembered history beyond five to six generations tends to get merged in mythology; they
have a low level of techno-economic development; in terms of their cultural ethos, language, institutions, belief and customs, they stand out from the other sections of the society and if they aren’t egalitarian, they are at least non-hierarchic.

Dr. Naik (Vidyarthi, (ed.) 1984: 71-72) differentiates the tribal groups from others on account of least functional interdependence within the community, lack of understanding about the full importance of monetary economics, primitive means of exploiting natural resources, underdeveloped stages of economy, multifarious economic pursuits, comparative geographic isolation from other people, common dialect with regional variations, political unity under a common tribal authority, least desire to change and customary laws, which are different from those of majority communities.

According to Bailey (1960:263), tribes can be distinguished from caste Hindus due to the fact that they live in the hills, they are not Hindus but animists, they are economically backward, and they speak tribal languages.

Nahar Ranjan Ray (1972) suggests that the Sanskrit term “Jana” refers to primitive communities of the autochthonous people like the Savaras, the Kullutas, the Kohas, the Bhillas, Khasas, the Kinnars and a countless number of many others of ancient times, whom today we know as ‘tribes’. Territories inhabited by these communities came to be known as Janapadas with the passage of time. There are frequent references in the ancient classical literature describing such territories as Atatvik Rajya, Manikantara (great forest region), and pratyantaradesa (frontier regions). Assimilation of these communities with
the other sections of the society has been a slow but a steady process. This indeed shaped the socio-cultural history of India.

Analysing the facts about tribes, against their historical background and views of the colonial administrators and anthropologists, Prof. Ghurye found it appropriate to describe them as the imperfectly integrated classes of Hindu society, who could be designated as the tribal classes of Hindu society, for the sake of convenience.

**Tribes of India**

Next to Africa, India has the largest concentration of tribal population. According to 1991 census, there are 427 Scheduled Tribe communities in India with a population of 67,758,380. The prerogative for their development in modern India ensures from Article 46 of the Constitution of India, which reads thus:

"the State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitations".

The word ‘tribe’ has not been defined anywhere in the Constitution of India. But it states in Article 342 that the Scheduled Tribes are ‘tribes or the tribal communities or parts of groups within tribes or tribal communities’ which the President may specify from time to time by public notification. As these communities are presumed to constitute the oldest ethnological segment of the Indian society, the term ‘Adivasi’ (‘Adi’ means oldest and ‘Vasi’ means inhabitant) is commonly used to designate them. The International Labour
Organsiation Convention-107 held at Geneva on 5th June 1957 classified these people as indigenous. The ILO Convention held at Geneva on 27 June 1989 adopted new international standards for indigenous and tribal peoples in all regions of the world, and thereby removed the assimilations orientation of the earlier standards. For instance, it recognised the ‘aspirations of these peoples to exercise control over their own institutions, ways of life and economic development and religions within the framework of the States in which they live.. ‘Notwithstanding the policy of the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989, India, a Secular, Democratic and Socialistic republic has been pursuing a policy of cultural pluralism ever since it became independent. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, had declared that: “We should help the tribal people to develop along the lines of their own tradition and genius, teaching them not to despite their past, but to build upon it”. (quoted in Elwin, 1963: 5).

The need to specify tribes and tribal communities as “Scheduled Tribes” arose only after the Constitution of India came into force on January 26, 1950. In the government of India Act 1935, a reference was made to the “Backward Tribes” and the Thirteenth Schedule to the Government of India (Provincial Legislative Assemblies) Order, 1936, specified certain tribes as backward in the then provinces of Assam, Bihar, Orissa, Central Provinces and Madras and Bombay. However, the first serious attempt to list “Primitive Tribes” in the country was made during the census of 1931.
Classification of Tribes in India

Due to multiplicity of factors and complexity of problems involved, it is not very easy to classify the Indian tribes into different groups. However, the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes took up the task and investigated the possibility of adopting classification criteria. Keeping this aim in view the State governments were asked to suggest the characteristics, which seemed to them most suitable in distinguishing the so-called “aboriginal” groups from the rest of the population.

Taking the above mentioned characteristics into consideration the tribes of India may be classified on the basis of their (a) territorial distribution, (b) linguistic affiliation (c) physical and racial characteristics, (d) occupation and economy, (e) cultural contact and (f) religious beliefs.

Geographical Classification

Looking at the physical map of India, and the distribution of tribal population, we find both geography as well as tribal demography permit a regional grouping and a zonal classification. B.S. Guha has classified Indian tribes into three zones. These are as follows:

(i) North and north-eastern zone
(ii) The Central or the middle zone and
(iii) The Southern zone
(iv) The Northern and Northern-Eastern zone consists of the sub-Himalayan region and the mountain valleys of the eastern frontiers of India. The tribal people of Assam, Manipur and Tripura may be included in the eastern part of this geographical zone while in the
northern parts are included the tribals of eastern Kashmir, eastern Punjab Himachal Pradesh and North Uttar Pradesh.

(ii) The Central or the Middle Zone

This zone consists of plains and mountains belt between the Indo-Gangetic plain to the north and roughly the Krishna river to the South and this is separated from the north-eastern zone by the gap between the Garo hills and the Rajmahal hills. In this zone we have another massing of tribal peoples in Madhya Pradesh with extensions in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Bharat, southern Rajasthan, northern Maharashtra, Bihar and Orissa.

(iii) The Southern Zone

This zone consists of that part of the southern India which falls south of the river Krishna stretching from Wynaad to Cape Comorin, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Coorg, Travancore, Conchin, Tamil Nadu, etc., are included in this zone.

(iv) Andaman and Nicobar

Although Guha has not included the inhabitants of Andaman and Nicobar Islands in any of these zones and has skipped their descriptions, yet these tribal people may be said to constitute a fourth zone. The main tribes living in this zone are the Jarwa, Onge, North Sentilese, Andamanese and Nicobari.

Linguistic Classification

At present people of India may be divided into four speech families viz., the Indo-European (Aryan), the Dravidian, the Austro (Kolar Munda) and the Tibeto-Chinese (Sino-Tibetan). D.D. Majumdar (1955) opines that “so far as the
tribal people are the concerned the Aryan speech comes into the picture only as a consequence of cultural contact since almost all of our tribal people have pre-Aryan or non-Aryan racial affinities and origins”.

**Racial Classification**

D.N. Majumdar (1955) has very rightly described the complexity of the problem of classifying the tribal people of India on the basis of racial affinities when he says that fixing the racial origins or affinities of the tribal communities of India is one of the most complicated tasks that has had to be faced by the Indian anthropologists. There is practically no direct evidence of those ethnic stocks who inhabited different parts of India in prehistoric times. The available knowledge about the racial composition to India in historic times is equally scanty. Therefore, all historical reconstructions regarding the racial history of India have to be based on conjecture.

The first scientific racial classification of India was attempted by Sir Herbert Risley. He published his findings in 1915 in the book The Peoples of India. He classifies the entire Indian population into seven racial types:

(i) Turko-Iranian
(ii) Indo-Aryan
(iii) Seytho-Dravidian
(iv) Arya-Dravidian
(v) Mongolo-Dravidian
(vi) Mongoloid and
(vii) Dravidian

These seven types may be reduced to the three basic types viz., the Dravidian, the Mongoloid and the Indo-Aryan. The latest racial classification of
Indian people are those given by Hutton, Guha and Majumdar. The three important groups of his classification are:

(1) The Negritos
(2) The Proto-Australoid and
(3) The Mongoloid

Despite the above mentioned scheme of racial classification, racially the tribes of India cannot be put strictly under any particular type of category.

Economic Classification

The classical classification of Adam Smith and the more recent classifications of Thurnwald and Herskovits have been applied throughout the world in classifying tribes on the basis of their economic life. The scheme presented by Thurnwald is taken as most acceptable in the Indian context and it is as follows:

(i) Homogenous communities of men as hunters and trappers, women as collectors – the Kadars, the Chenchu, the Kharia. And the Korwa are some of the Indian tribes falling into this category.

(ii) Homogeneous communities of hunters, trappers and agriculturists the Kamar, the Baiga, and the Birhor are examples of this type from tribal India.

(iii) Graded society of hunters, trappers, agriculturists and artisans most of the Indian tribes fall under this category.

(iv) The herdsmen-the Toda and some sections of the great Bhil tribes furnish classic examples in India.

(v) Homogenous hunters and herdsmen- this category is not represented among Indian tribes. The Todas do not hunt, nor do they catch fish or birds.
(vi) Ethnically stratified cattle breeders and traders – the Bhotias of the sub-Himalayan region of Uttar Pradesh breed yaks and are itinerant traders.

(vii) Socially graded herdsmen with hunting, agricultural and artisan population.

**Tribals in Pre-Independence era Situation**

During the pre-British period tribal communities in India remained fully or partially isolated from others in the country, and consequently they remained backward and suffered from poverty, malnutrition, disease, exploitation and ignorance in varying degrees. The colonial Government too did not pay any attention to the development of tribal communities, because it mainly aimed at regulatory functions, such as maintenance of law and order and collection of revenues. It enacted the Scheduled Districts Act in 1874 and kept large tract of tribal areas outside the jurisdiction of normal administration. In 1935 the Colonial government introduced the Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas Act in order to make non-applicable the legislations of Provincial Governments to tribal areas. However, the British policy of isolation increase the misery of the tribal communities, and they were exposed to unhindered exploitation. Their plight was heightened by the introduction of the National Forest Policy in 1894. This curbed their traditional rights on forests. The Forest Policy led to the induction of contractors, traders and non-tribal labour to forest areas in substantial numbers. Other consequences of the commercialisation of the forests were; continued depletion of forest cover, social erosion and decline of fertility in the soil. This further widened the socio-economic gap between the tribal communities and non-tribal communities.
Post-Independence era Situation

The Government of India decided to provide Constitutional safeguards to the tribal communities and enshrined them in the Constitution of India, which came into force on 26th January, 1950. The Fifth Schedule contains provisions as to the administration and control of Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes in the States other than the North-Eastern ones whereas the Sixth Schedule contains provisions as to the administration of Tribal Areas in the North-Eastern States.

Thus, welfare and development of tribal communities have been the national goal, and special responsibility of the Central and various State Governments. The socio-economic status of various tribal communities is not uniform. They continue to be at various levels of the techno-economic parameter. Scholars have variously categorised them, but in the context of the present scenario they may be divided into the following four categories:

(i) Hunter-Gatherers and Shifting Cultivators living in hilly and forest areas, and are somewhat isolated. They are found in pockets in South and Central India and in Andamans.

(ii) Settled Agriculturists, who are techno-economically on par with their neighbouring peasant communities, and are not isolated from peasant communities.

(iii) Educationally, politically and economically advanced tribes, with some exceptions, in the North-East, South-East, North, North-West and Central-India and

(iv) The industrial and urban migrant unskilled tribal labour in the States of West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh.
The disabilities to which the tribals have been subject to over the centuries include poverty, malnutrition, disease, ill-treatment, exploitation, illiteracy and marginalisation. Centuries of social repression have engendered in them a feeling of inferiority, it is not surprising that they have lost all confidence in themselves. However, the planned development effort, initiated soon after the country became independent, has undoubtedly contributed to the aggregate economic growth, and thus development has been a great success. But there is a great imbalance in development. It is now generally recognised that there is also a marked imbalance in development among the tribal communities themselves. A large number of tribal communities continue to extremely backward, some of them are still in the primitive food-gathering stage, whereas some others have registered economic and educational advancement.

Development doesn’t merely imply ‘economic growth’, it also denotes ‘social development’. In India imbalance in the development front is conspicuous because ‘economic growth’ hasn’t been properly tuned to social justice. In the context of tribal communities development has to strike a balance between economic and social domains, and it has to be culture specific. It has to ensure: (i) security in land tenancy protection against fraudulent alienation of land, and provision of compensatory land against public acquisition; (ii) initiation of effective steps to extricate tribal people from addiction to alcoholism; (iii) promotion of consciousness against the ruinous effect of chronic indebtedness; (iv) propagation of modern health culture for avoidance of improvident expenditure; (v) promotion of self-reliant productive work culture.
so as to alleviate indigenous; (vi) promotion of education to remove ignorance; (vii) cultivate in the individual of the ability to voice his grievance in the proper forum so as to seek redressal, (viii) their extrication from massive exploitation. Thus the concept of development connotes that all must be ensured of the means of sustain life and must have the sense of self-esteem as a person.

The interpretation of the concept of ‘development’ may be cited as an example. ‘Development’ was interpreted in a typical economist’s way. Economists who lean heavily on certain quantifiable indices, like consumption below a certain minimum, distribution of income, incidence of unemployment, minimum nutritional norms of food consumption, etc., have little appreciation for quantitative data. Thus the qualitative aspect of human development was ignored. From this point of view, development is a multi-dimensional process of progressively improve the social, cultural, economic and human conditions of the people—all vital sectors necessary for a balanced growth of society. “Due emphasis should be paid to establish a meaningful link between the local and national levels of development and of the world at large” (Rath, 1981). This means that no meaningful development projects maybe formulated without thorough knowledge of socio-cultural base and the physical environment of the people concerned.

L.P. Vidyarthi (1981) further clarifies by saying that “development means ‘growth’ plus ‘change’. It involves both the material and the human factors. Bitterly criticizing the typical economists’ approach, he says that “they believe that a given number of material inputs, when assembled in certain proportions,
yields the desired output measurable in quantified indicators such as rate of
growth, national income, per capita income, etc. They seem to be under
impression that growth, as assessed in terms of such gross indicators, is a value
itself. The non-material factors constitute for them but a contexts, social
services, a mere infrastructure; and social change, a bi-product of such growth.
He has consistently emphasised that socio-cultural factors are an integral part of
the dynamics of growth and that social change isn’t simply a non-functional or a
dysfunctional side effect of planning. In this context the concept of development
has to be defined and operated in terms of the cultural background of the
community concerned. While striving for the development of a group or an area,
due emphasis has to be given to their traditional values and historical
experiences.”

The Committee released that the benefits of development didn’t reach
uniformly all sections among the tribes. The primitive tribal communities
remained beyond the pale of development administration. Land alienation,
exploitation by private money lenders, cheating and fraud in the process of sale
of agricultural and minor forest produce continued unabated among the
backward and weaker among the weak tribals. The economic base of the tribal
communities gradually weakened with the emergence of a forest policy which
aimed at maximization of forest revenue through commercial management of
forests.

The status of women in society is a significant reflection on the level of
social justice in that society. Women’s status is often described in terms of their
level of income, employment, education, health and fertility as well as the roles they play within the family, the community and society. A tribal woman occupies an important place in the socio-economic structure of her society. The Dhebar Commission Report (1961) mentions that tribal women isn’t a drudge or beast of burden, she is found to be exercising a relatively free and firm hand in all aspects related to her social life unlike in non-tribal societies. The status of tribal woman in matrilineal societies has been observed to be somewhat better than that of women in patrilineal societies and they have a significant role in the tribal economy which goes unrecognized. However, after a comprehensive analysis of the various factors (literacy, health status, political participation, religion, ritual practice, etc) among the different tribes of India, it has been observed that the status of tribal women in comparatively lower than that of tribal men. Moreover, the status of tribal women has gone from bad to worse due to lack of developmental initiatives on the part of government and its various departments.

There have been studies on the status of women relating to their socio-cultural problems, their economic rights, their access to health, education, and employment, etc. But these issues haven’t been properly focused in relation to the tribal women. There are only a few studies on the status of tribal women in India. In this regard, the study of tribal women becomes important because the problem of tribal women differ form a particular area to another area owing to their geographical location, historical background and the processes of social change. For this there is a need for proper understanding to their problems
specific to time and place so that relevant development programmes can be made and implemented effectively. There is a greater need for undertaking a region-specific study to the status and role of tribal women which alone can throw up data that will make planning for their welfare more meaningful and effective.

It is very strange that women who are contributing effectively in the growth and development of nations shouldering variety of responsibilities are being discriminated at very level. They aren’t considered an equal partner in the process of development. There is a gender disparity in respect of education, health, employment, nutrition, and decision making power. No doubt, independent India has made various efforts to bring women into the mainstream of national development by enhancing their social, economic, legal, and political status, but in spite of the constitutional and legal safeguards to protect tribal women against social discrimination, violence, and atrocities much needs to be achieved in this context. And still there is a large gap between the theory and practice.

The National Policy of Education (NPE), 1986, regarded Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes, women, minorities, handicapped and other educationally backward sections as the deprived groups needing special attention. The 1986 Education Policy Resolution called for a strategy of educational development to correct regional imbalances and minimization of intra and inter-group disparities. Health services in the last few years have increased but the benefits from most of the policies and programmes have gone
to the privileged sections of society and the health needs of the tribal women are most neglected. As education and health are the most important indicators of human resource development, it is ironic that the tribal women are neglected in this regard on account of policy formulations and plannings in the efforts of the Government and its various departments.

The problem of development of tribal areas is primarily linked with the backwardness of these areas, poverty of the people and the concept of integration of tribals with the rest of the population. For promoting the welfare of Scheduled Tribes and for raising the level of administration of scheduled and tribal areas to the State level, Article 275 of the Constitution provides for grants-in-aid from Consolidated Fund of India to States for implementation of development programmes. Also, special funds have been provided in each plan for the welfare of Scheduled Tribes in the sector of welfare of backward classes. The assumption behind such an arrangement is that these funds will be additive to general development outlays which will accrue to the tribal people and areas.

Education is fundamental to all kinds of development of man. Illiteracy is invariably associated with deprivation and socio-economic underdevelopment. Realization of this basic truth ultimately found expression in the resolution “Education for all” at the World Conference on Education, held in March 1990, at Jomtein, Thailand. One of the joint commitments undertaken by the international community at this Conference was “to work for programmes that reduce illiteracy and provide educational opportunities for all children irrespective of background and gender, to prepare them for productive
employment and life long opportunities i.e. through vocational training which enables children to grow to adulthood and social context."

It is unfortunate that education policies, plan and priorities are made and unmade by the prevalent social structure. There has been stiff resistance from old and the new vested interests to the ambiguous programmes of literacy and education, for disadvantaged groups, which comprise people who are deprived of resources and privileges. This term is used to disabled children, women and disabled persons in policy propositions in the Human Rights Charter and the Rights of Specific Groups.

The importance of education is an agency of modernization, as well as source of employment, has long been realized in our national plans for tribal welfare. A greater proportion of the grant both from state and central sectors has been invested in imparting education at primary, secondary and post-matric levels. However, the wastages and dropouts in tribal education have been equally stupendous. Owing to this desired benefits have been drawn only by such sections of the tribes who were prepared to take advantage from this programme.

There are various aspects of tribal education such as medium of instruction, text-books, teachers, audio-visual approach, types of schools, etc., which have been thoroughly studied by the Tribal Unit of the National Council of Educational Research and Training and the Indian Council of Social Science Research. There are, however, certain issues which are quite urgent and should be included in the Fifth Five Year Plan. Girls education among the tribals should
be given a high priority. Their education has remained confined only to that section of the tribals that came under the influence of the church. It is desirable to bring about social and economic changes in the tribal families by educating their women folk. Secondly, the numerous jungle tribes are still at the level of pre-literacy. And it is so, mainly because of their isolation, economic backwardness and special cultural problems, special and intensive programmes will have to be thought out for removing the darkness of complete illiteracy from the primitive tribal communities scattered over various pockets in many of the states of India.

Education and economy in the tribal society are inseparable and a large proportion of wastage and drop-outs can be explained in terms of the use of the children by the families for economic purposes. The provision of residential schools, supply of mid-day meals, Ashram schools, Balwadis, Anganwadis, etc, have solved the problem of small section of the tribal people. It is being proposed that the establishment of a network of night schools will enable the tribals to study in the evening after the day’s work. It also suits the genius of the tribal culture, as tribals are used to attending their youth dormitories in the evening which functioned as traditional schools.

In general, it should be admitted that the socio-economic changes proposed in the constitution for the Scheduled Tribes haven’t made the desired impact. In order to accelerate the rate as well as direction of change, a new strategy to fulfil constitutional obligations has to be built at the policy implementation as well as personal levels. The use of research materials has
been the least popular, especially with the state governments. A gulf of difference exists among the academics, administrators, and tribal leaders which acts as a major obstacle in the path towards tribal development.

Review of Literature


This book on Development of Education Among Tribal women is an attempt to review several available studies concerning directly or indirectly, different aspects of education among tribal women in Gujarat and to bring together their findings so as to be able to present a clear picture of their educational development and its associated variables. She has also tried to supplement this exercise by incorporating a brief historical perspectives of the educational development of tribals, a broad narrative of their socio-economic conditions, and a detailed analysis of available data regarding literacy, levels of educational attainment and enrolment. She has put an effort to put together the findings of available studies regarding the educational development of tribal women in Gujarat.


The importance of education in India has been realised since antiquity, particularly in the Vedic period. This was also true to the medieval India, where much importance was attached to education with an uninterrupted flow of the teachers and students. However, after independence, serious efforts were
initiated in the direction of spreading mass education. A number of incentives provided to the students of the deprived sections of the society, particularly the SCs and STs. Its positive impact was witnessed on the enrolment of students, retention rate and increase in the percentage of literacy.

The author has thrown light on the problem of mass education, education of the Scheduled Tribes, the incentives provided in terms of scholarships, residential schools, ashrams and sevashrams, feebooks and above all reservation of seats in educational institutions. The impact and shortcomings of these initiatives have also been highlighted by the author.


Human resources of a country are the most precious endowment and health care is intrinsic to the well being of the people. Health status of the people determines the average expectation of life, production, earning capacity, employment and finally welfare. One the other hand, several economic variables like income, employment, purchasing power and poverty determine the health of the people. Unfortunately only small amounts are available for health care in developing countries. Even in the case of those amounts, there is maldistribution through health structures heavily biased in favour of service for the urban elite. In most developing countries only 20 to 30 of the people enjoy ready access to health services of any kind. The prevailing tendency has been in favour of high cost, low coverage, low impact and elite oriented health services.
The failure to obtain the objective of social justice and equity is being attributed to such factors as political turbulence, rapid population growth, social conditions uneven economic development, interests, low per capita production and consumption, low level of literacy, poor quality of life because of scarcity of essential goods, facilities and money, poor communication and transport facilities, unfavourable environment, lack of employment opportunities etc. In this context the goal of “Health for all by 2000 A.D” is of great importance.


In this book he has highlighted the health status of tribals which is very low and its is miserably low among the tribal women due to a number of factors like poverty, illiteracy, ignorance and utter neglect towards women. He has also pointed out that during the last five decades, the status of tribal women hasn’t improved though much efforts have been done on the part of Government and various organisations. He is also of the opinion that the health problem of tribal women differed areawise due to geographical location, historical background and process of social change. Therefore, for any meaningful welfare measure, there was a greater need for undertaking reason-specific studies.


Tribal development has received a great deal of attention since independence resulting in spurt of studies on tribal communities. It must be appreciated that more and more attention is now being given on the problem of rural health particularly for the tribals and other backward groups. He has
highlighted that medical practitioners and public health workers in India as elsewhere, have been reporting that very often that tribal people don’t utilise the medical facilities available to them. Unless and until the reasons of failure are known, the very development programme can’t be successful. Since a large number of tribal communities are there with varied socio-cultural traditions, economy and interaction with outside world, the concept of disease and nature of treatment for tribal people are likely to be different.

Objective of Study:

Orissa occupies a unique position in the tribal map of India and has the second largest tribal population among the states of India. In terms of their absolute numbers, the largest tribal population if found in Madhya Pradesh (15,339,034) followed by Orissa (7,032,214) and Bihar (6,016,914), according to 1991 census. There are sixty two types of tribal population and they constitute almost 23 per cent of the total population of the state. The tribes of Orissa are not of one uniform compact mass and they present a wide linguistic, ethnic and cultural variety being in various stages of development-economically, educationally and culturally. Because of these striking differences in their levels of development and in view of the vast diversity of the socio-economic situation in different tribal areas what holds good in one case, may not be good for others. And, therefore, any single approach for health and educational development is not only suitable but also unthinkable.

Unfortunately, the primitive tribes of Orissa have relatively little or no access to even the most elementary form of health care and education. Traditionally enough, they are the very people who are in utmost need of health
care because they are the most vulnerable to disease and have high degree of morbidity and malnutrition. And it is the tribal women who are at the lowest rung of all kinds of development activities including education and health. As education and health are the most important indicators of human resources development, this thesis intends to assess the programmes and policies relating to health and education which are operating under the Government of Orissa as well as the centrally sponsored schemes for the development of tribal women. The main focus will be to see what post-independence development has done to improve the status of tribal women through various policies and programmes relating to health and education and its impacts on them in the society at large. The study will also seek to find out the failure of policies and planning in tribal districts of Orissa.

Tribal development experiences of about five decades suggest that despite all intervention programmes, the Saoras of Gajapati district, Orissa, still continue to be relatively underdeveloped as in the past. They are extremely on the lower side in terms of development indicators and demonstrate a case of extreme deprivation. It has been further realised that owing to drastic degradation of environment, particularly the gradual depletion of forest resources and diminution of land productivity. The economic base of the Saora society has weakened. The society is now fraught with severe forms of imbalance and disharmony in maintaining a ‘happy life’. It is said, “development has rather led to maladjustment” among the Saoras, and the strategies of development adopted from time to time have been partial and haven’t responded to the basic needs of the tribal people. In this context, this
thesis work intends to analyse the health and educational policies exist for the tribal communities and their impact on the way of life of the Saora women from the development perspective, because the stages, contents and extent of development achieved by the Saora women have been loosely defined and measured in terms of hypothesised norms for dominant societies.

**Development of Tribal Women Through Five Year Plans**

Development of tribal women during the first plan period was mainly welfare oriented. The Central Social Welfare Board was established by the Government of India in 1953 which undertook nationwide welfare measures for the development of women and children. During the second plan period, women were organised into Mahila Mandals in rural and tribal areas for facilitating convergence of health, nutrition and education. Third and Fourth plans accorded high priority to women's education, immunisation of pre-school children and supplementary diet for children and mothers. In the sixth plan, a multidisciplinary approach was adopted with thrust on health, education and development. In the Eighth plan, a shift was made from development to empowerment of women and a number of measures were taken for their social and economic emancipation. The establishment of National Commission for women at the state level, and launching of Mahila Samridhi Yojana (MSY) for sensitising women at the grass-root level in the rural areas. The State Commission of Women makes in-depth studies on the economic educational and health situation of the women in the state with particular emphasis on tribal
districts and areas which are underdeveloped with respect to women's literacy, mortality and economic development.

**Condensed Course of Education for Adult Tribal Women**

The scheme of condensed course of education for adult tribal women was started by the State Social Welfare Board with the objective of extending education and training to the needy widows and destitute, deserted and economically backward women so as to enable them to require eligibility for suitable employment.

**Health Policies for the Development of Tribal Women**

The Constitution of India provides that health is a state responsibility. India is a signatory to the Alma-Ata Declaration 1978, and the National Health Policy, adopted in 1982, clearly states that India's commitment to the goal of Health for All by the year 2000 through the primary health care approach. Health development is recognised as an essential and integral part of national socio-economic development and every efforts being made to see that health and health related activities are systematically planned and co-ordinated at all levels for the development of the people.

**State Health Programmes/Projects**

As per the National Health Policy, a number of Central Plan Schemes and Centrally Sponsored Schemes are being executed in the state with 100 per cent central assistance.

**Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS)**

This scheme is being implemented in the state through 279 ICDS projects in 261 blocks. The scheme offers a package of health care services
covering supplementary nutrition, immunisation, pre-school education, health check-up, referral services and health education to children with the age group of 0-6 years.

The Orissa State Council for Child Welfare is implementing the scheme “Care and Protection of Street Children” since 1990-91, in order to provide integrated community based non-institutional basic services for the development of street children. The scheme is being implemented through NGOs.

**Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA)**

DWCRA is a sub-scheme of IRDP introduced in 1983-84. The primary objective of the scheme is to provide opportunities to the women members of rural and tribal families below poverty line to secure for themselves gainful self-employment improve their economic status and thereby to promote their empowerment.

It has been realised that if any programme has to be successful in tribal areas, it requires awareness campaigns and education. There is an urgent need to take cognisance of the needs and interests of tribal women while formulating schemes for their development.

**Hypothesis**

The hypotheses of the study are the following:

1. There is lack of health and educational facilities and lack of coordination among the existing programmes which are the major obstacles for the development of tribal women in the state.

2. Poor and inadequate allotment of funds pose a serious obstacle for tribal development.
3. Neglect and lack of special attention to tribal and scheduled areas inspite of constitutional provisions in India.

4. Lack of an integrated approach to tribal health and education has proved to be a disaster for the development of women, despite various effort being made by the Central and the State Government.

5. While formulating plans and policies for tribal women, their needs and interests aren’t given due consideration in policies and programmes and when it comes to implementation for women, it is badly implemented at every level.

**Methodology**

Since Fifth Plan period, a Tribal sub-plan has been formulated with the objective of improving the socio-economic conditions of the tribal population, strengthening of infrastructure in the tribal areas, protecting the tribals against exploitation, and promoting tribal interests through legal and administrative support. The TSP strategy was brought into effect with the commencement of the Fifth Five Year Plan in 1974-75. In tribal areas, developmental programmes are being implemented through 21 Integrated Tribal Development Agencies and 17 Micro Projects.

As the present study would specifically look into the health and educational policies which are operating in district (former parts of Ganjam District) of Orissa, I would like to mention the following policies in this regard.

Firstly, Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA) is undertaken in the proposed district for the study. Secondly, there is Condensed Course of Education for Adult Tribal Women. This scheme was started by the tribal welfare board with the objective of extending education and
training to the needy widows, destitute and deserted women so as to enable them to acquire eligibility for suitable employment.

The method of study in the proposed research is analytical and empirical. The research work would exclusively rely on primary as well as secondary data. It has been focusing on tribal dominated areas of Gajapati District in which the policies and programmes have been operating for tribal women. The data has been collected through the interview and scheduled method. The help of the concerned officials has been sought to select the area of study. Informal discussions have been held to get an insight into the proposed research study. The concerned researchers, women and voluntary organisations, self-help groups at the grass-root levels, the significant people involved with the implementation of tribal policies and programmes relating to health and education are being contacted in order to gain a comprehensive knowledge regarding the development of tribal women and the impact of policies on their socio-economic life. Various published and unpublished official records have been consulted to gain an indepth knowledge regarding the study. The primary source has also been collected from the reports of Commissions of the Central and the State Government. Among the secondary sources, in includes books on tribal development relating to their health and educational policies, Periodicals, Journals, Magazines and press clippings which I have referred for my research work.
Scheme of Chapterisation

There are six chapters in this thesis in which I have put in my best efforts to make it a complete and successful study.

In this work the first chapter entitled Introduction in which I have attempted to focus Tribal Development Approaches in India. It also deals with the objective review of literature, objectives, hypothesis and methodology of the proposed study.

The second chapter deals with Health and Educational Policies for the Development of Tribal Women in Orissa. Which elaborately discusses the various approaches to tribal development. It also highlights the Government’s efforts for the development of tribal people.

The third chapter tries to focus Tribal women in Orissa: A Study of Health and Educational Policies in Gajapati District. Which are existed for tribal women for the improvement of their status in the state of Orissa.

The fourth chapter Impact and Assessment highlights the various educational plannings, programmes and policies which are existing for the development of tribal women on the basis of its field reports and the researcher’s field analysis.

The last but the conclusion chapter highlights the summary findings of the research study and give some suggestions and recommendations on basis of its study.