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EVS PROJECT REPORT

TOPIC - To study the life of tribal communities and their importance concerning environmental conversation

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Introduction

It is common knowledge that tribal communities are the guardians of the environment and the natural resources. From ancient times, the tribals have been safeguarding the environment. It has been established that tribals are an integral part of the environment and play a significant role in protecting and preserving it.

The report deals with understanding and highlighting the role of tribes in safeguarding the environment and its resources. It attempts to emphasize the symbiotic relationship between them.

The paper also examines the caries laws related to the tribes residing in India. It discusses the relevance of these laws and the Acts that have been passed in India. It also informs about the laws and regulations about the environment and its resources. It also deals with the nature and scope of tribal development.

Lastly, the report explains how forest resources are essential for tribal survival. It tries to study how the tribals have been economically dependent without damaging the forest. Later in the paper, it is discussed how the tribal community is in danger and the conflict of interest with the government. It is accentuated that the mainstream ideas of economic development have been proven hazardous to the environment and have led to the depletion of its resources. It also provides a possible solution for economic development without exploiting the environment and the tribal communities of India.

OBJECTIVE OF THE REPORT

Following are the main objective of the study-

1)To discuss the Laws and Acts passed to safeguard the interest of the tribal communities and the natural resources of India

2) To study the economic life of tribals and how they sustain themselves in the modern world.

3)To establish the symbiotic relationship between the natural resources and the tribals. To study how natural resources are essential for the livelihood of the tribes

4) To study the nature and scope of tribal development

5) To examine how economic development affects the environment and the tribal communities. Also, provide possible solutions to these problems

IMPORTANCE OF TOPIC

The topic 'Study the life of tribal communities and their importance concerning environmental conversation' holds extreme importance in today's time. Tribal peoples constitute 8.6 percent of India's total population, about 104 million people according to the 2011 census. This is the largest population of the tribal people in the world. Tribals have traditionally hunted and collected food in the forest. Therefore they have always taken a strong stand when it comes to conversation of the forest, the environment and other natural resources.

The tribal way of living is often criticized and termed as primitive, however there is lots of learning from that lifestyle. They have managed to survive, in fact lead a healthy economic life without disrupting the environment. In the modern times, when the natural calamities are on increase, owing to the pollution and other harmful activities, we must take inspiration from the tribal communities and their way of life.

Since the last few decades there has been increasing emphasis on economic growth of the country. However, the thoughtless methods have posed danger for the environment and the tribal communities. These communities must be protected and safeguarded. The topic of our project is extremely relevant as it seeks to study the life of tribals, how they protect the environment, how they sustain themselves financially. The report also dweller on the possible solutions to have economic growth while preserving our precious resources and the Earth.

METHODOLOGY

- The present study is based on secondary data, which is collected from books, journals, websites.
- Research is based on qualitative data and not quantitative data.
- Qualitative research involves collecting and analyzing non-numerical data to understand concepts, opinions, or experiences. It can be used to gather in-depth insights into a problem or generate new ideas for research.
- Every stage of this research is explained and justified with precise information.
- Irrelevant details and detailed background information, unnecessary description and explanation were avoided, and extra attention was given to this report.

Overview- Tribal communities and the Environmental Well-being

India has a rich history of having a special connection with nature and all its sources. Forests are a big part of Ancient India's stories, history, heritage, and legends. Great leaders like Ashoka and Shivaji issued orders encouraging the planting of trees along the roads and on camping sites and prohibiting the cutting of fruit trees. In general, before the advent of British rule in India, people's use of forests was mainly done through local customs and laws. These discouraged the cutting of trees like banyan and viewing their social, cultural, and ethical associations with society. Several temples had forests regarded as sacred, and any cutting of trees was prohibited.

Before elaborating on the benefits of having tribal communities for environmental well-being, it is essential to understand what a tribe is and the tribal people.

The term “tribe” has been derived from TRIBUZ, which has a “Latin root.” The term means three divisions into which the early Romans were grouped. The Meaning of the term thus varies from nation to nation. In spatial and cultural consideration Indian tribal Population is at widely different stages of social and economic development. Therefore they do not have any Permanent Structure.

Characteristics of a Tribe

Given below are the primary characteristics of any tribe. However, It is important to remember that each tribe has unique features.

- Tribals live in an isolated area, usually culturally and environmentally rich habitat.
- They follow Primitive methods of occupations such as hunting, gathering of minor forest produce, and therefore they are backward economically as well as educationally.
- Tribes usually have a rich culture of music, art, and dance.
- Most often, Tribal communities practice environmental conversation.

- Tribal communities depend on natural resources such as forests, oceans, etc., for their survival.

- They trace their origin with the oldest ethnological section of the Population.

India has one of the largest tribal populations, second only to the African continent. The total scheduled tribe population in India, as per the 1991 Census, is about 6.78 crores which constitute about 8.08% of the total population of 83.86 crores in the country, excluding the people of Jammu and Kashmir, where Census would not be conducted due to a disturbing situation. Of this, about 87 percent of the Scheduled Tribe population is concentrated in the central belt covering eight states of Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Bihar, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, and West Bengal. About 10 % of the northeastern region and about 3 % are in the other states. Madhya Pradesh the highest concentration of 1.54 crore Scheduled.

For the longest time, tribal communities were termed backward communities. However, now they are recognized as the weaker section of the society, which needs to be protected. Research has shown that tribal communities are an integral part of environmental protection. From ancient times, tribes have contributed to ecological conservation and preservation. Tribals have perpetually inhabited the forest and, therefore, feel closely for it. The forest is the primary source for their economic independence and their survival. They have a primitive way of living and hence unaware of the modern facilities. They still use fire for heat and lighting. They depend on fruits and meat from the forest. They often go fishing from the nearby water body. Even their dress is made of natural materials. Since they heavily rely on the forest and other natural resources, they do their best to protect the environment.

However, there is a constant fight between the tribals and the government. The tribal communities want to protect the environment, but the government thinks it's necessary to exploit it for economic growth.

THE LAWS RELATING TO THE TRIBALS AND THE FOREST

Tribals are peace-loving people. Their attachment to the land traditionally occupied either for habitation or cultivation is unmatched. They generally resisted invasions on their territory. They have also reacted violently against their exploiter, represented by money lenders, middle ma, contractors, liquor vendors, zamindars, and government administrators, mainly exercise, police, and revenue officials. Recorded history, particularly after the advent of the British, mentions a series of struggles waged by the tribals against the British and other exploiters for their survival, and they followed their traditional laws, legal systems, and customs. The various issues can be classified relating to the development of tribal culture, planning, and the self-government of tribal areas.

The problem with development plans is that they rarely consider the existing culture and economy of the tribals. The logic for imposing these programs is created by the belief that tribals are backward and helpless. They need outsiders to act as their guardians, which insulted a slight advantage because these masqueraded guardians abuse their privilege, thereby depriving the tribals of their right to livelihood. After the Indian Independence and declaration of it being a 'welfare state,' it became the bound duty of our planners to ensure the development of the poor masses suffering from hunger, poverty, disease, and illiteracy.

There were special provisions in the Constitution to safeguard the social, economic, educational, and political interests of weaker sections of the community, including tribals. The tribals were only treated as those living far away from civilization in the forests and hills. Still, post independence, the policy of laissez-faire followed by the British could no longer be continued. The tribals also had the right to come in line with society, and for that, the gap between them and the rest of the people had to be bridged. Post-Independence, the forest department took over the monopoly of developing forests, and tribals became foreigners in their forests and hills, especially after the Forest Conservation Act, 1980.

The Forest Act, being the product of the British colonial days, reflects the exploitive intentions of the colonial and feudal society of the time, rather than the environmental and ecological interests. Based on a revenue-oriented policy, its main objective was to regulate dealings in forest produce and augment the public exchequer by levy duties on timber.8 The Act also provides for procedures for reservation and incidence of reservation. No right could be acquired in or over reserved forest except by

(a) succession; or

(b) under a grant or contract entered into with the government; or

(c) by any other persons having pre-existing rights.

The rights were lost as soon as the draft notification was issued. Any person indulging in prohibited acts such as setting fire to the forests, hunting, trespassing, quarrying, fishing, and

setting traps was liable to be prosecuted. The State Government, on the other hand, can assign any of its rights in a reserved forest to a village community and make rules in furtherance.

OTHER SUBSEQUENT LAWS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

The forest-dwelling Scheduled Tribes were living in the famous for generations. Their plight was miserable in the past. It continued to be so despite several ameliorative efforts on the parts of the states. Non-recognition of their over forest land and habitat was a historical injustice. The forest rights law of 2007 aims to do away with this injustice. Endowing the tribal people and other forest dwellers with certain rights and duties, the law attempts to recognize the relationship between the tribal people and the forest. There are lingering fallacies that cast shadows on the Forest Rights Act that can convert tribal villages into.

Such a covert process of privatization will defeat the very purpose of the law meant to restore the tribal people to their original habitat. Another predicament is the consequence that flows from the provision for critical wildlife habitat. The forest rights in critical wildlife can be subsequently modified or resettled when the officials under the wildlife Protection Act 1972 are satisfied that the activities or impact of holders of forest rights are sufficient to cause irreversible damage and threaten the existence of the said species and their habitat.

As a result, the forest area where the tribal people have the freedom to move in search of subsistence and livelihood is reduced. The induction of the critical wildlife habitat can be criticized as affecting the very purpose of the Act. Any law relating to forest rights treating the tribals as foes, and not as friends, of the forest habitat, will only help mask the intruders and treat forest communities as scapegoats. This fact has been considered and accepted by the National Tiger Conservation Authority when it suggested that tiger reserve states should recruit local forest-dwelling tribes as field staff. It is essential to strike the distinction between those who are in the forests for survival and livelihood and those who are there for commercial purposes and for making a profit. ‘It is the latter category that needs to be prevented from gaining access to forests. This is the actual fight.

ECONOMIC LIFE OF THE TRIBALS

1. Small economy- The production and transactions of goods and services occur within small communities in a limited geographical area.

2. Reciprocal exchange- The exchange of goods and services is carried out on a reciprocal basis, through barter and gift. The motive of profit is generally absent.

3. No surplus- The manufacture of consumer goods necessary for bare sustenance is usual. An economic abundance is rare.

4. Division of labor- Age and sex from the primary criterion for division of work instead of professional training and specialization.

5. Tribal markets- The exchange of reasonable or limited sale of surplus goods occurs in periodical tribal markets, which also serve as socio-cultural networks in maintaining inter-village ties.

6. Simple technology- The tools are either made by the user himself or by local artisans living in the neighborhood.

7. Slower innovation- The rate of internal or induced innovation is meager, making the economic structure stable but unprogressive.

8. Importance of family and kingship- The families in tribal societies is a unit of both production and consumption. The kinship acts as a cooperative unit. In numerically smaller groups, the whole community serves as a collective unit.

Based on studies by Indian Anthropologist, Nadeem Hasnain (1987; 19) has classified the economic life of tribals in India as Follows:
1. Food gathering and hunting tribes.
2. Tribes engaged in hilly cultivation.
3. Tribe engaged in cultivation on plain lands.
4. Simple artisan tribes
5. Pastoral tribes
6. Profile of Tribals in Maharashtra

The total population of Maharashtra, as per the 2011 Census, is 11, 237, 4333 of this, 10,51,0213 (9.4 percent) are scheduled Tribes (STs). The ST population of the state constitutes 5.1 percent of the country's ST population. The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Act, 1976, has notified 47 STs in Maharashtra. Of these, two STs, namely, Chodhara and Thodi, have been announced with an area restriction. Chodhara has been reported in all the districts of Maharashtra, excluding the communities of Akola, Amravati, Bhandara, Gondia, BuldhanaChandrapur, Nagpur, Wardha, Yavatmal, Aurangabad, Jalna, Bid, Nanded, Osmanabad, Latur, Parbhani, and Hingoli. Those have been notified only in Aurangabad, Jalna, Bid, Nanded, Osmanabad.

Latur, Parbhani, Hingoli, and Rajuratashil of Chandrapur district. Of the STs, three, namely, Katkaria (Kathodi), Maria Gond, and Kolam, are among the Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) of India. Katharina (cathode) and Maria Gond are Sub- 7 groups of Kathodi and Gond, respectively. The population of Kolam, as per the 2001 Census, Is 173,646.

They are Mainly Distributed in Yavatmal, Nanded, Osmanabad, Chandrapur, and Gadchiroli Districts of Maharashtra. As the census does not provide subgroups, Separate census figures are not available for Katkaria (Kathodi) and Maria Gond. The growth rate of the ST population of Maharashtra in the decade 2001-2011 at 17.64per cent is lower than the overall 21.54 percent of the state population as a whole.

TRIBAL LIVELIHOOD AND FOREST RESOURCES

Tribal communities in India, especially in the 5th and 6th scheduled areas, substantially depend on forest resources for subsistence and income needs. This is because they do not have any other alternative, neither they have effective sources of livelihood due to the absence of quality education and skills. These tribal people use various forest products in the form of leaves, fruits, flowers, and other forest products in their day-to-day life. The life processes of the tribal people are reflected in their economy, religion, polity, and social institutions cannot be understood without going into various aspects of forest surroundings. Tribals are the original inhabitants of India, for which they are called Adivasis. Because of their long association with forests, they are known as benyajati (forest-dwelling communities) and van basis (inhabitants of the woods). During the pre-colonial period, i.e., before the firm establishment of British colonial rule in the mid 19th century, various tribal communities in India had more or less settled in deep natural forests. They had established their customary rights over forest land and other resources.

Tribals are peace-loving people. Their attachment to the land traditionally occupied either for habitation or cultivation is unmatched. They generally resisted invasions on their territory; they have also at times reacted violently against their exploiter represented by money lenders, intermediaries, contractors, liquor vendors, zamindars, and government administrators, particularly after the advent of the British mentions a series of struggles waged by the tribals against the British as well as other exploiters for their survival and they followed their traditional laws, legal systems, and customs. Until the British intervention, the tribal people believed that they were the owners of the forest and forest resources that surround them. The attitude of the tribal people towards forest resources was not changed much until the country's independence. Looking at their traditional use of forest resources, one can say they were more forest resources randomly.

The various issues can be classified relating to the development of tribal culture, planning, and the self-government of tribal areas. The problem with evolution is that they do not consider the existing culture and economy of the tribal. The logic for imposing these programs is created by the belief that tribals are backward, helpless, illiterate, and need outsiders to act as their guardians, which is undoubtedly false. The disadvantage here is that these masqueraded guardians abuse their privilege, thereby depriving the tribal their right to livelihood.

Massive deforestation has been observed in the lifestyle processor of the tribal people, which can be categorized as environmental effects, social effects, and economic effects. The social impact of deforestation restricts the access of tribal people into the forest and limits the availability of forest products. It affects the religious activities life cycle virtuals, customers, practices, and the habits of the tribal people similarly, the economic effects of deforestation, due to the development projects as observed have drastically influenced the traditional livelihood resources of the tribal people, which were produced in the forest many people all that the tribal people are

responsible for the destruction of natural resources and massive deforestation of the forest resources.

After the Indian Independence and declaration of it being a 'welfare state,' it became the bound duty of our planners to ensure the development of the poor masses suffering from hunger, poverty, disease, and illiteracy. There were special provisions included in the Constitutions to safeguard the social, economic, educational, and political interests of weaker sections of the community, including tribals. The tribals were only treated as those living far away from civilization to safeguard the social, economic, educational, and political interests of weaker community sections, includes-independence tribals were only treated as those living far away from civilization, the forests, and hills. Still, post-independence, the policy of laissez-faire followed by the British could no longer be continued. The tribals also had the right to come in line with society, and for that, the gap between them and the rest of the people had to be bridged. Post- Independence, the forest department took over the monopoly of developing forests, and tribals became foreigners in their forests and hills, especially after the Forest Conservation Act, 1980.

Besides, all aspects of tribal life in India are closely linked to the forests in such a way that forests are the life support system of tribals and vice-versa. This relationship is symbiotic, as the tribals depend on forests as a child depends on the mother (Government of India, 2004). Securing forest rights of tribals is essential because insecure forest tenure arrangements undermine forest investment and protection, fuel conflict, and jeopardize the tribal communities' livelihoods and development prospects (RRI, 2017). Certain forest rights are crucial for poverty alleviation in tribal areas, including extremism and achieving sustainable development goals.

The Government of India has subsequently or simultaneously passed several laws, rules, and executive orders which dilute the critical provisions of both PESA and FRA. These include

1) WildLife Protection (Amendment) Act, 2006, allowing the Wild Life Protection authorities to deny or curtail rights of tribals as provided under FRA

2) Forest Conservation Act (Amendment) Rules, 2014, which further strengthens the exclusionary conservation policy

3) Guidelines of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate in August 2015, to lease out 40 percent of the degraded forest in the country to private companies for afforestation

4) Constitution of Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority under the Supreme Court order, since 2002

5) Enactment of Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act (CAFA), 2016

6) CAFA Rules, 2018

7) Policy decisions are taken at the inter-ministerial meetings in 2012 and 2015, allowing diversion of forest land for specific categories of projects without the consent of Gram Sabha.

The Forest Act, being the product of the British colonial days, reflects the exploitative intentions of the colonial and feudal society of the time, rather than the environmental and ecological interests. Based on a revenue-oriented policy, its main objective is to regulate dealings in forest produce and argument the public exchequer by levy of duties on timber. The act provides for procedures for reservation and incidence of reservation. No right could be acquired in or over reserved forest except by

a) Succession

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c) By any other persons having pre-existing rights.

The rights were lost as soon as the draft notification was issued. Any person indulging in prohibited acts such as setting fire to the forests, hunting, trespassing, quarrying, fishing, and setting traps was liable to be prosecuted. The State Government, on the other hand, can assign any of its rights in a reserved forest to a village community and make rules in furtherance.

Effects of economic development on the life of tribals

Maharashtra is a leading economy in the country; its education, health, nutrition, and tribal development are also considered better than the national average. However, there are many shortfalls in primary education, health, food, and tribal development, especially when inter-district performance is considered. Apart from its performance being below the benchmark in specific indicators, there are severe issues of inter-district and social disparity in outcomes.

The development can be measured in 3 terms

- Low
- Medium
- High

The development which was undoubtedly happening was quite negligible or insignificant and slow-paced but bought positive changes and results nonetheless.

The magnitude of development is measured by considering six indicators as tribal literacy rate, female literacy rate, percentage of the tribal, urban population, percentage of their workers in non-agricultural sectors, tribal work participation rate, sex ratio. For computing the composite index, the method of normalization has been employed by suggested by Kundu (1980)

Low

There are as many as ten districts, for instance, Parbhanni, Ahmadnagar, Buldhana, Osmanabad,

Nanded, Gadchiroli, Aurangabad, Akola, and Jalgaon were identified as very backward in tribal

development in 2001. These districts are mostly are confined to the central part forming a continuous shallow tribal development region, and another one is in the northeastern part of the state. In such areas, their

literacy, the proportion of urbanization, work participation rates are meager.

In this low level of tribal development, there are as many as 15 districts of the state. They are confined to the southern part, northeastern, and northwestern. A low level of development surrounds the region of deficient development. Altogether, the low-level districts and very low-level development are 25, constituted more than 83 percent. It means that there is mass

underdevelopment of the tribal population in the state of Maharashtra, which is one of the leading states of the country.

MEDIUM LEVEL

Three districts are identified as a medium level of development. These are Nasik and Thane in the northwestern part and Nagpur in the northeastern region. Nagpur is the second capital. Tribals in this district are also benefited from the development process. Nasik and Thane, although they are with

a high proportion of the tribal population but located near Mumbai and the western part, which is also developing very fast, particularly in the urban areas.

The preceding discussion reflects that the tribals mostly live in unpleasant situations and marginalized conditions, and a very insignificant part emerging with some satisfactory level of well-being.

Poverty, illiteracy, non-availability of drinking water, lacking necessary infrastructure facilities like road and

communication, schooling facilities, etc., are the standard features of tribal villages. We find here almost all

tribal villages, barring a very few, were stricken with poverty and therefore unable to have accessibility to

health, education, better employment, food, etc. Considering the parameters like literacy, female literacy, level of urbanization, work participation,

percentage of workers in the non-agricultural sector, and sex ratio, the composite indexes for tribal and non-tribal

segments of the population have been computed for comparative analysis at the village level in Maharashtra's northwestern part. The multi-dimensional tribal well-being index based on twenty indices of their overall

development of well-being is calculated. It is found that the well-being and health problems in tribal areas are mainly the result of poverty, low purchasing power, inadequate and poor quality of food and unsafe drinking water, lack of poor sanitation, etc.

The villages like Borvan, Itwai, and Kankala are the most lagging, and Surya Chapada is slightly less harmful. Otherwise, all these villages are most backward. Bhola village is the top-ranking

(45.50) and followed by Bhanwad (31.37), Karamba (28.62), and Kakarpada (20.14) are some of the villages evidenced with better

status in terms of tribal well-being. The tribal villages located in marginalized remote areas are the most lagging ones.

THEN HOW ARE THE EFFECTS POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE?

- In a nutshell, the effects are relatively neutral but progressive
- Economic growth has given the tribals a decent exposure, and there has been significant growth in socio-financial status, education, health care, occupation sector, and overall well being of tribal people
- Bhanwad and Bhantode tribal sectors in Nashik and Pucca are highly developed compared to other communities, followed by Mumbai, Nashik region-wise. They have essential education attainment, well to do literacy rate, and an average food supply, which is protecting them from excessive malnutrition
- Some villages like Bardi, mandir, etc., have low socio-economic development mainly due to lack of knowledge and exposure. Mostly village centric the is attained only by 30 to 51 people and many lack lands, are homeless or lack telephones and tv connections due to lack of development even though it is getting better
- The tribal villages, which are relatively moderately developed in terms of well-being, are mostly confined to Nashik and Thane district. For instance, Chandikapur Nashik district and Karamba Thane district.
- (CI) ranges from 20 to 30. From this analysis, one can comprehend here that it is the

Nashik district barring one village Kakarpada in Akkalkuwa Tehsil of Nandurbar district in which all the tehsils fall in the medium category. It means that the Dindori Tehsil can provide the basic facilities of the requirement to the tribals; hence, they are at a moderate level of well-being and having potentiality and can also improve further for the sake of tribal development.

SOLUTIONS

1. The Indian government makes a variety of rules and legislation for the protection and betterment of the tribals
2. TWDs and Fund activation rights
3. Proco program (a program generated by the government for better funds and resources and education for the Maharashtrian tribal community
4. Better educational facilities
5. **TPFF Tribal climate-resilient agricultural framework** is a program ensuring that funds are provided to tribals in case of droughts
6. Providing better health care facilities
7. Setting up a better network for reaching out to the tribals and creating helplines, and providing information about them

Conclusion

The role of the judiciary played in protecting forest and wildlife, by leaving the core areas uncovered by law as fields appropriate rather for legislative action than for judicial formulation is significant. Besides, emphasising the significance of forests, the courts endeavoured to protect the rights of persons affected by development projects and tribal people, who form part of the forest environment. To protect and preserve forest and natural resources, they tried to enforce the concept of sustainable development to solve the environment-development dilemma, and upheld the controls on exfoliation of Wildlife. However, these declared objectives are yet to be realised by enacting appropriate legislation. It is here, that the courts tried to fill the gaps and in this process, rightly looked at the problems in a holistic fashion.

The major problem faced by the tribal population at present time is about the lack of knowledge of their own rights. They themselves and others also are not aware of the particular rights which have been vested in them. The basic reason for such a mess is the lack of any specific legislation which specifies the rights of tribals with respect to the environment conservation. Tribal people has been worshiping the environment considering it as god from time immemorial and this is one of the main reason, they protect it from any hazard, as because of their moral obligations, but due to this emerging words the tribals have been suppressed in different manner by several powerful sects of society. Therefore, this is the need of the hour to specify their rights and enact a statute to support the tribal people to secure their rights. The reason behind securing the rights of the tribal is just not limited to them but at last it comes to the protection of the environment and this is well understood from the paper now that tribal people are the best protectors of the environment, who serves the environment without serving much of their own selfish interest.

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