

**TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT AND EMPOWERMENT-  
A STUDY ON WAYANAD DISTRICT  
IN KERALA**

**Executive Summary of Minor Project Report Submitted  
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# **TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT AND EMPOWERMENT -A STUDY ON WAYANAD DISTRICT IN KERALA**

## **Executive Summary**

The term tribe is probably derived from the Roman word 'Tribua' which means a political unit and was applied to refer to social group defined by the territory they are occupied. As the name implies tribals are 'adivasis' or original dwellers living in the subcontinent from unrecorded time and possibly driven into the forest by more aggressive settlers. Pre-independence tribals living in forests ,hills and even the plain area isolated from the mainstream. They are most physically distinguishable with darker skin and stout built physique. They often live in houses made of thatched roof, mud, bamboo and brick houses set in swampy valleys and plateaus.

A process of tribal empowerment was initiated in India through the 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment in 1993. The reasons for this amendment were the largely ineffective Panchayati Raj System in the country and the need for adapting to the tribal system of local self governance. Tribal development and empowerment activities are carried out in India by both the government and the NGO's .The government gives constitutional guarantees to the tribals and the NGO's also joins hand with the secular civil society groups and work for the upliftment of the tribals.

The accelerated tribal development efforts and empowerment programmes were started in Kerala in 1974-75 with the introduction of Tribal sub-plan strategy in India. Till this period tribal welfare programmes were carried by government departments without a specific fund and programmes. Under the sub-plan strategy separate funds were allotted for implementing the

specific development by the Central and State governments. It gave new phase to tribal development activities. ITDPs were also introduced in tribal regions to co-ordinate the programmes. Later in 1995, Panchayathi Raj System offered some opportunities to tribal participation and involvement in decision making through Ooru Kootams. This Opportunity of participating helped to improve the way of lives of the tribal people.

Considering the number of tribal population, Wayanad has the highest number of tribes in Kerala. As per 2011 Census 136062 tribes were living in the Wayanad District and about half of the population made the interiors of Wayanad their home. Tribes were the original inhabitants of Wayanad region. The various sects of adivasis of Wayanad district include Paniyas, Kurumars, Adiyas, Kurichyas, Ooralis, Kattunaikkans etc. But once the British era opened roads to this region, there occurred a migration to this region and during 1940s, and these aborigines were misplaced tremendously..Tribal development aims at increasing the incomes and strengthening the material aspects of tribal culture through better utilization of the environmental resources such as forests, minerals, flora& fauna, agriculture etc.

Problem of landlessness, indebtedness, houselessness, rehabilitation unemployment and health problems remain unsolved among the tribals. Atrocities on women and unwed mothers are also seen among the tribals of Wayanad.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Wayanad has the highest number of tribes in the state of Kerala.36 % of the tribal population of the State live in the district of Wayanad. The social, economic and educational interest of tribals are protected through legislation and promoted by government through various departments and agencies for the last six decades, still the tribals live in poverty and unemployment. This

situation calls for special programmes, projects and approaches for their integrated development and well being. In Kerala Scheduled Tribal Development Department is a major agency which implement beneficiary programmes for scheduled tribal people. It provides educational facilities, housing assistance, concessions ,scholarships and others kinds of assistance to the needy people.

Distribution of land to the landless is a new venture initiated by the State government. Healthcare and medical rehabilitation, provision for employment etc. are also provided to them. Central assistance to sub-plan also aimed at the sustainable development of scheduled tribes in India. Studies show that the socio-economic condition and standard of living of tribals are not yet improved as expected. Eventhough there are different schemes and programmes, tribals of our State still remain exploited and depressed and are in poverty and unemployment.

## **Scope and Significance of Study**

The area of study confined to the Wayanad district of Kerala. The tribes taken for the study include Paniya and Kurumar. Paniya community has the largest number of population among the scheduled tribes of Kerala. Another group of tribes are Kurumar or MullaKurumar or MalaKurumar refers to a single ethnographic community known as Kurumar .This study includes the supports given by the institutions like ITDP of Wayanad and some NGOs to these tribes. Most of the assistance are given in the form of grants and subsidies to meet their house needs, educational needs, entrepreneurial needs, agricultural needs etc. This study aims to find out the way in which these funds are reaching their hands and how they utilise it for the said purposes.

Every year Central and State governments are allocating crores of rupees on various schemes and projects for tribal development, but the desired goals

are not achieved so far. Since independence through Centrally sponsored schemes funds and plan outlay are utilized for the benefit of the various groups of tribals. Eventhough the conditions of tribals are more or less stagnant in Kerala.

No comprehensive study has yet been made on the tribal empowerment through various development activities in Wayanad District .The present study is an attempt to bridge the gap through the exposition of case study based on the demographic features of tribals and developmental activities of various agencies. It is hoped that the study could be helpful to understand the real issues among the tribals of the Wayanad District and thereby the State.

### **Objectives of the Study**

- i) To examine the tribal empowerment activities undertaken in Wayanad district.
- ii) To make an appraisal of tribal development programmes of Wayanad district.
- iii) To analyse the role of government and non-government institutions in tribal development
- iv) To know about the financial assistance programmes in tribal areas.

### **Methodology of Study**

The present study is designed as a descriptive one. It is descriptive one, as it describe the present situation as it is, and it collects first hand information from the respondents using a pre-structured schedule. Both Primary and secondary source of data are used. Primary source of data collection include participant observation, discussion, pre-structured interview schedules etc. The secondary source of data collection include office records of the Department of

Tribal Development ,NGO's books, publication of the State Planning Board and unpublished records like text books, journals, magazines, online resources etc. For the purpose of data analysis, various mathematical and statistical techniques will be used.

## **Summary**

Attempts have been made by both government and NGOs for the upliftment of the tribals ever since independence. A series of programmes and policies have been designed to promote social and economic development. Anyway the fruits of development have not reached the tribal poor through their intervention. The Constitution of India has provided many provisions and safeguards for the welfare and development of the tribals. It include protective provisions, development provisions, administrative provisions and reservational provisions.

Ministry of Tribal affairs frame various programmes and schemes for the tribal development and is implemented through the State Government and voluntary organisations as centrally sponsored schemes. These schemes may be for social, economic and educational development of the tribals. The process of tribal empowerment was initiated in India through the amendment of 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitution. The Government provides Constitutional guarantees to the tribals but fails to implement them properly. The NGOs addresses the tribal problems and issues more considerably. They reach to disadvantaged tribal groups in the remote area. All these institutions facilitate the empowerment of tribals.

In the first chapter attempts have been made to introduce the topic, its meaning, definition, objectives, hypothesis, scope, methodology and limitations of the study.

In the second chapter an attempt have been taken to look into the related past studies and an extensive literature review had made about the topic.

The third chapter Profile of Wayanad district portrays the current scenario of Wayanad ditrict and about the tribes.

The fourth chapter looks into the tribal development and tribal welfare and the role of Government and Non-Government Organisations for upliftment of the tribes.

The fifth chapter the analyses the primary data collected and an empirical work has been done to know whether the standard of living of tribal people improved.

The last chapter portrays the summary,findings,suggestions and conclusions related to the work.

## **Findings**

1. It is found that majority of the tribes who interact with the society are male persons.
2. It is noticed that most of the Paniya and Kurumar tribes are illiterate or does not get any type of education.
3. It is observed that tribes does not reach to a professional educational level.
4. The Kurumar tribal community are more better in the educational level as compared to the Paniya tribes ,so they give more emphasis to the education of their children.
5. As the financial aspect is considered, the Paniya as well as the Kurumar tribes are financially weak.
6. The percentage of separated or widowed persons are higher in tribal community as compared to other non - tribe people.
7. The usage of alcohols and drugs are more in tribal community so their life expectancy is very low
8. The living conditions of Kurumar tribe are more better than the paniya tribe.
9. Governmental and Non-Governmental organisations provide assistance to construct the houses of tribes.

10. As the ownership factor of houses are considered, it is found that 70.67% of Paniya tribe and 76% of Kurumar community have joint ownership in their House, they like to live in joint family.
11. Most of the assistance are given to the tribes in the form of subsidies by Governmental agencies.
12. It is noticed that after involving in the activities of NGOs, tribes get dignity and self esteem and their social status also increased.
13. It is observed that through the interaction with the Governmental and NGOs tribes get more accessibility to the Government offices to get their services.
14. It is found that the activities of NGOs may be in different form such as creating awareness, educating, creating self-confidence, conducting weekly meetings, form as groups to get benefit etc.
15. It is evident that the procedures of ITDP are very complicated thus it cause enormous delay in sanctioning the loan.
16. It is observed that there is significant difference exist among the tribal sub-groups as regards their income. The income earning capacity of Kurumar tribes are more than the Paniya tribes.
17. It is noticed that there is no significant difference exist among type of NGOs as far as their activities among tribal sub-groups are considered.
18. It is observed that the health and sanitation activities are depending on the tribal sub-groups.
19. It is found that the educational and indebtedness factors are also associated with the tribal community.

## **Suggestions**

1. The Governmental organisations and NGOs should arrange some more awareness programmes with regard to the factors such as education, income health, sanitation etc.

2. Emphasis should be given to the Paniya tribes because they are far behind other tribal community.
3. Ensure that the assistance are really reached in the hands of the tribes.
4. Develop a comprehensive policy on tribal development which protects nature and natural resources
5. Follow-up programmes should arrange for the fruitful results of activities by both the Governmental organisations and NGOs.

## **Conclusion**

Through the study the extent of tribal development among the tribal people are analysed as well as their awareness about the avenues of tribal development. The role of governmental and NGOs to support the tribal development are also analysed. Mainly two tribal sub-groups are selected and the differences existing among those sub-groups with regard to the tribal development are also noticed in this study.

The challenge faced by Government of India since Independence is how to give proper provision to the tribal people for ensuring social and economic justice. The tribal people are born and grow as the children of nature. They lead a traditional life of their own, therefore, encouraging their traditional arts and culture. The Government and NGOs should try to train and build up a team from the tribal people to do the administration services or development work. The Constitution of India has made definite provisions for the administration and upliftment of tribal people. We can conclude that human development is people centric. Socially and economically disadvantaged people like Scheduled Tribes should give proper formal and institutional support to ensure development and thereby we achieve empowerment.

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