

A COMPARATIVE STUDY ABOUT SCHEDULED TRIBES IN WEST

BENGAL, INDIA

Arup Dey

ABSTRACT

Tribes of India are generally known to be descendants of primitive inhabitants, many of whom have in course of history been pushed into the periphery of, and largely isolated from, India's mainstream society and culture. Just after Independence, the Constitution of India prepared two schedules for identifying various tribal and low caste groups, which are officially called 'Scheduled Tribes' (ST) and 'Scheduled Castes' (SC) respectively. The census authorities enumerate tribal and low caste and backward peoples on the basis of these detailed schedules. The lists for ST and SC groups have been substantially enlarged since its first use in the 1951 census, and the numbers of tribes and low caste groups that were declared as 'scheduled' according to the census of 1991 were 573 and 1,091 respectively. Santals are one of the major and most numerous tribes of India. They have a long cultural heritage, and they are concentrated in the eastern states of West Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. The total population of West Bengal at 2001 Census has been 80,176,197. Of this 4,406,794 persons are Scheduled Tribes (STs) constituting 5.5 per cent of the total population of the state. The state has registered 15.7 per cent decadal growth of ST population in 1991-2001. There are total thirty eight (38) notified STs in the state. The Scheduled Tribe(ST) people are engaged any type of works like Agricultural sector, Industrial Work(Labour & Administator), Service sector (mainly Teacher, Doctors, Official job, ministerial Person, Exesicutive officer etc).This pares scan the ST people are important part in West Bengal...IndiaWorld.

KEYWORDS :- Scheduled Tribes, Backward people, Community, Economy.

INTRODUCTION

Tribal population is a minority both at the all-India level (8 per cent of the total) as well as within West Bengal (nearly 6 per cent), their absolute sizes of about 68 million and 8 million respectively (according to 1991 census) are not really small.² More importantly, unlike in most other parts of the world, the rising civilisation in the Indian subcontinent neither eliminated nor quite absorb these primitive inhabitants of the land, thus leaving room for the continuity of these materially less advanced tribal communities with their own socio-cultural distinctiveness and isolation from the 'mainstream'. The tribal existence within larger Indian society is often quite distinctive on various counts, namely the ecological and environmental circumstances of their habitation, lifestyle and culture, social organisation, kinship and inheritance patterns, religious beliefs and practices. There are indeed often several sociocultural ingredients to distinguishing a tribal group from the mainstream population (MAHARATNA, A,2002). Tribal groups are far from homogeneous not only in India but also elsewhere. Despite tribal diversity across world, what appears somewhat common is their typical isolation and distinctiveness - on various counts including sociocultural and life-style patterns - from the mainstream population and society. Historically speaking, reasons for such tribal isolation and distinctiveness are complex and not very easy to resolve. Fürer-Haimendorf (1985:1) attributes the 'phenomenon of cultural and ethnic heterogeneity' in South Asia largely to an 'attitude basic to Indian ideology which accepted the variety of cultural forms as natural and immutable, and did not consider their assimilation to one single pattern in any way desirable'. This evident in tribal communities where there always exist a symbiotic relationship between their livelihood pursuits and the surrounding natural resource base like the forest, land, water bodies, mineral resource and other flora and fauna. For tribal people land is important source of livelihoods. Around 90% of tribe's populations in India were depending on land directly or indirectly for their

Since independence Government of India and Government of various states have taken lots of initiation for development of tribal livelihoods. Lots of programmes are implemented for sustaining their livelihoods. The development policy for the tribals has changed its strategy continuously in search of sustainability. The

social scientists have laid emphasis on the importance of cultural fabric of the tribal world to accelerate this process (Upadhyay, 2000).

The social and economic conditions of the people belonging to the Scheduled Tribes have been the concern of Indian political and social movements in pre-independent India. Indeed to Gandhiji, the father of the Nation, freedom was not a mere political objective but the of raising the mass of people from poverty and degradation. The mainstream political and social movements, which were profoundly influenced by Gandhian approach, emphasised the imperative need to transform the Scheduled Tribes.

Soon after Independence, the basic principles for the development of the Scheduled Tribes were clearly enunciated by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of Independent India, in the form of five principles known as 'Tribal Panchasheel', which was later endorsed by the Renuka Roy team (1959), Dhebar Commission (1961) and Shilu Ao Committee (1969). Starting from the Special Multipurpose Tribal Blocks of 1956, the measures taken for development of Scheduled Tribes are multifarious. The creation of separate Tribal Development Blocks in the Second Five Year Plan (1956-61) and of a Tribal Sub-plan (TSP) within the State plan in the Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-79), and formation of the Large-scale Multipurpose Cooperative Societies (LAMPS), Tribal Development Agencies, Integrated Tribal development Area Projects (ITDA), Modified Area Development Approach (MADA), Micro Projects for Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) reflected the course of tribal Development administration in the country (Rao, 2001).survival (Verma 1995).

SOURCE OF DATA

1.PRIMARY DATA :-FIELD SURVEY .

2.SECONDARY DATA :- a. Books

b. journals

c. Internets

d. Other :

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OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study was designed to fulfil the following objectives:-

1. To understand the role of ST population in Bengali culture.
2. Evolution the ST culture in west Bengal.
3. To find out the relation between Bengali & Tribal culture.

4. To find out the improve Tribal society for the impact of Globalization.
5. To find out the relation between Santhal & other tribal culture, life-style in W.B, India .
6. TO find out the literacy and Educational level of ST population in W.B.
7. To find out the Work Participation Rate (WPR) of the ST population in W.B, India.

METHODOLOGY

This research paper discussed various type of Tribal and their life-style in West Bengal, India. And also find out their inter-relationship. In this work completed, used various type of statistical method, like :-

1. Age-sex Ratio
2. Literacy and Educational Index.
3. Population and Proportion Index.
4. Work Participation Rate (WPR) etc.

DATA BASE INTERPRETATION

SIZE & DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION

As per 2001 Census :-

- 1.The total population of West Bengal at 2001 Census has been 80,176,197. Of this 4,406,794 persons are Scheduled Tribes (STs) constituting 5.5 per cent of the total population of the state.
2. The state has registered 15.7 per cent decadal growth of ST population in 1991-2001. There are total thirty eight (38) notified STs in the state.
- 3.The Santal represents more than half of the total ST population of the state (51.8 per cent). Oraon (14 per cent), Munda (7.8 per cent), Bhumij (7.6 per cent) and Kora (3.2 per cent) are the other major STs having sizeable population.
- 4.Along with Santal, they constitute nearly 85 per cent of the state's total ST population. The Lodha, Mahali, Bhutia, Bedia, and Savar are the remaining STs, and having population of one per cent or more.
- 5.The rest of the STs are very small in population size. The STs in the state are predominantly residing in the rural areas (93.9 percent). Among Lodha, Savar, and Bedia more than 95 per cent are residing in the rural areas. Contrary to the overall situation among the majority of tribes, Bhutia has recorded the highest 34 per cent urban population. The Mahali (10.2 per cent) and Kora (9.9 percent) are the other STs having comparatively higher concentration in urban areas.
6. ore than half of the total ST population of the state is concentrated in the four districts namely Medinapur, Jalpaiguri, Purulia, and Barddhaman. Of the remaining districts, Bankura, Maldah, Uttar Dinajpur, and Dakshin Dinajpur have sizable ST population.

Table:- Population and Proportion of Ten Major STs, 2001 Census

SL. No.	Name of the Scheduled Tribe	Total population	Proportion to the total ST population (%)
1.	Santal	2,280,540	51.8
2.	Oraon	3 617,138	14.0
3.	Munda	341,542	7.8
4.	Bhumij	336,436	7.6
5.	Kora	142,789	3.2
6.	Lodha	84,966	1.9
7.	Mahali 76,102 1.7	76,102	1.7
8.	Bhutia	60,091	1.4
9.	Bedia	55,979	1.3
10.	Savar	43,599	1.0
All Scheduled Tribes		4,406,794	100 %

Source: Office of the Registrar General, India

SEX RATIO OF ST PEOPLE

As per 2001 Census, 1.The sex ratio of total ST population in the state is 982, which is higher than the national average for STs (978).

2. The state also has recorded a higher child sex ratio (0-6 age group) of 981 as compared to the aggregated national figure (973) for the STs.

3.The sex ratio among Bhutia (999) is the highest among the major STs. But the child sex ratio (951) is low among them.

4. Bedia has recorded the lowest sex ratio of 962. The situation is just the reverse among Bedia.

ST PPEOPLE LITERACY & EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

As per 2001 Census :-

1.Among all STs, 43.4 per cent of the population has been returned as literate,

which is lower than the national average (47.1 per cent). The male literacy rate of 57.4 per cent and female of 29.2 per cent, show a gender disparity in literacy.

2. Of the ten major STs, Bhutia with 72.6 per cent overall literacy, 80.2 per cent male and 65.2 per cent female literacy respectively, is well ahead of others

.3 Savar are at the other extreme having 26.3 per cent overall literacy and 16 per cent female literacy rate .

4.Total of 51.7 per cent of the STs in the age group 5-14 years have been attending any educational

institutions. Of the ten major STs, Bhutia has recorded the highest 77 per cent and Savar the lowest 35.5 per cent of their respective population attending educational institutions.

5. In West Bengal, merely 8.4 per cent of total literates among STs are having educational level above matriculation. The Bhutia with 26.1 per cent are well ahead among the major STs in this regard.

Table:- Literacy Rate among Ten Major STs Literacy Rate

SL NO.	Name of Scheduled Tribe	LITERACY RATE (above 7+ years)		
		Total	Male	Female
1.	All Scheduled Tribes	43.4	57.4	29.2
2.	Santal	42.4	57.3	27.0
3.	Oraon	43.4	55.4	31.0
4.	Munda	41.0	54.0	27.7
5.	Bhumij	45.6	61.6	29.1
6.	Kora	43.4	58.4	28.2
7.	Lodha	34.8	46.8	22.5
8.	Mahali	41.1	55.6	26.3
9.	Bhutia	72.6	80.2	65.2
10.	Bedia	48.4	61.7	34.6
11.	Sevar	26.3	36.4	16.0

Source: Office of the Registrar General, India

WORK PARTICIPATION RATE (WPR) of ST PEOPLE

As per 2001 Census :-

1. 48.8 per cent of the ST population has been recorded as workers, which is close to the aggregated national average for STs (49.1 per cent).

2. Of the total workers 65.7 per cent has been returned as main workers and 34.3 per cent as marginal workers.

3. WPR at 43.7 per cent among females is slightly lower than males (53.8 per cent).

4. Gender disparity, however, is paramount in the category of main workers; 78.3 per cent males and 49.9 per cent females have been returned as main workers. The percentage of female marginal workers is more than twice than that of male.

5. Among the major STs, Savar has recorded the highest WPR at 53.4 per cent, while it is lowest among Bhutia (36.3 per cent).

6. Industrial category wise, of the total ST main workers, 23.7 per cent have been recorded as cultivators and 45.1 per cent as agricultural laborers.

7. The Mahali are ordinarily involved in non-agricultural activities with only 5.3 per cent of their main workers in cultivation and 19.6 per cent as agricultural labourers.

Table:- Distribution of Total, Main & Marginal Workers among STs

M/F/T	Total Workers (Percentage to Total Population)	Main Workers (percentage to Total Workers)	Marginal Workers (Percentage to Total Workers)
Male	1,195,480(53.8%)	936,302(78.3%)	259,178(21.7%)
Female	953,775(43.7%)	475,831(49.9%)	477,944(50.1%)
Total	2,149,255(48.8%)	1,412,133(65.7%)	737,122(34.3%)

Source: Office of the Registrar General, India

MARITAL STATUS

1.The distribution of ST population by marital status shows that 50.6 per cent is never married, 43.1 per cent currently married, 5.4 per cent widowed, and 0.8 per cent divorced /separated.

2.The Santal has recorded the highest one per cent of their total population as divorced/ separated, while it is the lowest among Oraon (0.5 per cent).

3. For all STs, 2.6 per cent of the female population below 18 years – the minimum legal age for marriage – is ever married. Of the ten major STs, Savar has recorded the highest 3.5 per cent of their females as ever married, which is well above the state average for STs.

4.On the other hand among Oraon and Bhutia only 2 per cent of females are ever married below the stipulated age.

5.The ever married males below 21 years – the stipulated age for their marriage – constitute 2.1 per cent of their population. Of the ten major STs, Mahali have recorded the highest 2.9 per cent ever married males, while it is the lowest among Bhumij (1.7 per cent).

Table:- Percentage of ST Population by Marital Status

SL NO.	NAME OF THE SCHEDULED TRIBE	NEVER MARRIED	CURRENTLY MARRIED	WIDOWED	DIVORCED/ SEPARATED
1.	SANTAL	49.9	43.4	5.7	1.0
2.	ORAON	54.3	40.4	4.8	0.5
3.	MUNDA	50.9	43.1	5.2	0.7
4.	BHUMIJ	49.3	43.9	6.0	0.7
5.	KORA	49.9	43.6	5.8	0.8
6.	LODHA	50.3	43.8	5.2	0.7
7.	MAHALI	48.2	45.7	5.2	0.9
8.	BHUTIA	53.6	40.9	4.7	0.8
9.	BEDIA	49.3	45.4	4.6	0.6
10.	SAVAR	48.0	46.4	4.9	0.8
11.	ALL SCHEDULED TRIBES	50.6	43.1	5.4	0.8

Source: Office of the Registrar General, India

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This report begins with a review of traditional pattern of tribal livelihoods in West Bengal. It reflected how the tribal culture and their livelihood is closely associated with nature. At first I tried to discuss total size & distribution of tribal population in W.B. The population of Santhals is more than any other Scheduled tribe(51.8%), and Savar population is lowest . And also discuss the sex-ratio of different tribal group.

Then I try to discuss about literacy and Educational level. Bhutia is Highest literacy rate(72.6%) of any other scheduled tribe, Munda is lowest(41.0%). 48.8 per cent of the ST population has been recorded as workers, which is close to the aggregated national average for STs (49.1 per cent). Of the total workers 65.7 per cent has been returned as main workers and 34.3 per cent as marginal workers. The distribution of ST population by marital status shows that 50.6 per cent is never married, 43.1 per cent currently married, 5.4 per cent widowed, and 0.8 per cent divorced /separated..The Santal has recorded the highest one per cent of their total population as divorced/ separated, while it is the lowest among Oraon (0.5 per cent). For all STs, 2.6 per cent of the female population below 18 years – the minimum legal age for marriage – is ever married. Of the ten major STs, Savar has recorded the highest 3.5 per cent of their females as ever married, which is well above the state average for STs. The total of 4,406,794 ST population 74.6 per cent are Hindus, followed by 6.1 per cent Christians, 1.8 per cent Buddhists, and merely 0.4 per cent Muslims. In short ST population in majour part in W.B ,and they play very important role in social, economic , and political part.

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