

CHAPTER ONE

STATE, NGOS AND TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT: A STUDY IN DOOARS REGION OF WEST BENGAL WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE ROLE OF THE NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS SINCE 1991.

INTRODUCTORY NOTES

1.1. INTRODUCTION

“There’s really no such thing as the ‘voiceless’. There are only the deliberately silenced, or the preferably unheard.” was the remark of Arundhati Roy while receiving the 2004 Sydney Peace Prize. This deliberately unhearing the voice of the marginalized sections which in the present context refers to the scheduled tribes can be pointed out to be the main reason behind the lopsided development process. The idea of development assumed to be perfectly suitable for the scheduled tribes by the policy framers and the academicians without paying heed to the perception of development of the tribals themselves have furthermore flared the problem of tribal development in India. The search for the best approach for the development of the scheduled tribes has been a debatable topic for long. This is because the heterogeneity of the tribal society cannot be compromised at any cost in the name of development which in itself would stand to challenge the very idea of unity in diversity that has always stood as the binding force of India as a nation. Therefore, the idea of diversity cannot be diluted on a different scale for the marginalized communities that comprise the 8.06% of the Indian population. In this regard Amiya K. Kisku in a workshop held at the Centre for Studies of Economic Appraisal on Alternative Tribal Development Perspectives in Calcutta on March 8-10 cited in Bhaumik (1988) rightly points out that the smooth functioning of a healthy tribal lifestyle is to a major extent dependent upon a strong relationship with nature. Therefore, the problems faced by the tribals cannot be solved by the application of modern technology of development alone. This is because of their dependence upon the natural habitat and environment which demands a collaborative process of development efforts. According to Khisku, genocide and ethnocide are the two methods of decimating the tribals; genocide in the form of uprooting and displacement for giving scope to modernity and industrialization while ethnocide by the systematic destruction of tribal culture and identity.

On the other hand, we do have a school of thought that strongly disapprove the seclusion of the scheduled tribes as the specimens of study backed by the idea that these groups of people need to develop on modern lines for which a change in their culture and tradition is inevitable. Scholars like Ambika P. Ghose stand to be the vanguards of such an opinion.

Rejecting both the above stated extreme ideas of tribal development as irrelevant and unnecessary, the tribal activist such as Basta Soren cited in Bhaumik (1988) emphasizes upon the necessity to understand the internal structures of the scheduled tribe societies that act as the guiding force in their everyday life so as to bring about a serious change in the condition of the tribals. The existing culture and economy of the tribals are not taken into account in the process of development plans by the planning authorities that act as a major hindrance in the outcomes of those plans. The general idea that the tribals are helpless and backward that demands immediate guardians for help which often are found in the form of the outsider non-tribals needs to be rectified first. The concept of guardianship has always proved to be harmful for the overall development of the tribal identity which is why mere preservation of their culture and identity fail to address the mega question of tribal development. The recreation of an administrative structure by completely ignoring the existing tribal structures has proved to be a major hindrance because it is believed by scholars like Lahiri, Basu and Barman cited in Bhaumik (1988) that approximately eighty five percent of the allotted funds for tribal development are actually spent on the maintenance of the externally created administrative structure for the purpose of the supervision of the distribution of the ironically remaining ten to twenty percent of the total tribal funds to the beneficiary scheduled tribes. Therefore, the questions of the right to decide for themselves through participation of the tribals act as a major area for discussion in the due course of the studies on tribal development.

The present research intends to delve deeper into the meaning of tribal development from both the scholarly as well as from the layman's (tribal) point of view, thereby bringing the two on a single platform of understanding in order to achieve the desired outputs from the process of development. The role of the non-governmental organizations in the empowerment of the scheduled tribes cannot be ignored because they are considered to be the third agency of development. In order to understand the role of the NGOs as actors/facilitators in the development of the tribal people, we need to interrogate deep the core elements of development and the approach towards tribal development followed by the role of the non-

governmental organizations in the process of tribal development at length for which we have taken up micro level study of the Dooars region of West Bengal that is a home to many different scheduled tribe communities of the country.

The present chapter begins with an introduction and moves forward to explain the changing conceptions of development under section (1.2). The core ideas are dealt in section (1.3) that includes the meaning of development and Right to Development, the role of the state and the non-governmental organizations in development, the meaning of tribal development in India and the importance of participation in development. Section (1.4) is dedicated to the acknowledgement of the earlier works conducted in the area through a brief review of literature. Section (1.5) explains the research gap that has not been filled by the earlier thinkers and points out the necessity of the present research. We have placed the conceptual framework (1.5.1), the research problems (1.5.2) the objectives of the research (1.5.3) research questions (1.5.4) and the hypothesis (1.5.5) along with the methodology adopted in the research in section (1.5.6). The organization of the thesis is placed in section (1.6) which concludes the chapter with a summary of the following chapters of the thesis.

1.2. CHANGING CONCEPTIONS OF DEVELOPMENT

The idea of development which is generally equated to the process of transformation from savagery to civilization in all walks of life engulfing quantitative to qualitative betterment is both inevitable and desirable. It involves a holistic approach that cannot be confined to a single variable such as economy or polity. However, the change in one variable definitely leads to the change in other variables. The connotation of economic growth which was equated to development in the first phase of the development of the Development Theory has been gradually replaced by changes in the quality of human life which involves the granting of freedom to the individuals so that they may choose the best for themselves in the process of development. Apart from these, the other important elements such as environmental development, capacity building, equitable distribution of wealth, welfare based development and sustainable development, are considered to be generated as vectors of economic growth that occupy a place of strategic significance in the understanding of development. In such a situation, it is believed that the demands of the people are met with meaningful policies by the agencies of development that attempt to bring about a qualitative change in the lives of

those people for whom developmental goals are actually designed for. In the contemporary era, development is considered to be an internal social process taking place within every country, where the basic requirements of the people are fulfilled by the wise and durable application of the country's resources. Economically, the definition of development suggests the nation's fulfillment of people's needs, employment, and the improvement of national wealth. As a matter of fact, "Development Theory by itself has little value unless it is applied, unless it translates into results, and unless it improves people's lives" (Lewis T. Preston, Former President, World Bank, quoted in Todaro 2000). According to Bjorn Hettne (2009), 'Development in the modern sense implies intentional social change in accordance with societal objectives' Pointing out the fact that not all societal objectives are developmental where some are only inclined towards establishing authority, Jan Nederveen Pieterse (2012) goes a step ahead and defines development as 'the organized intervention in collective affairs according to a standard of improvement.'

Therefore, the process of development is expected to be meaningful only when it becomes reliable enough to bring about a positive qualitative change in the lives of the people which is why the interpretation of development solely on the basis of the calculation of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or Per Capita Income stands to be questionable without fulfilling the qualitative criteria of Human Development Index (HDI). In understanding the idea of development one cannot ignore the human factor in it because ultimately the answer to the vital question of development for whom cannot be substantiated by the mere growth in investments, infrastructures and institutional betterment without addressing the people for whom these growths are actually intended to serve. However, one cannot ignore the importance of economic growth because the definition of development to a developing nation cannot be visualized without economic betterment where poverty happens to be a wide spread disease which can be controlled by economic betterment and later on completely cured by qualitative development. This ambitious goal of qualitative betterment must not simply try to clone the developed North, and hence should not be based on the lines of modernization alone because without addressing the core areas of development of one particular country, the superstructure created by imitating the West shall prove to be faulty in the long run. Therefore, the policy of development must be designed only after understanding, analyzing and incorporating the ideas of the people of the area that requires the intervention of the developmental agencies in bringing about development. The idea of

participation of the beneficiaries therefore becomes one of the primary criteria that need to be fulfilled in the formulation, implementation and analysis of the development process.

The primary agency of development especially in the developing countries happens to be the State. The State decides on the primary issues of policy formulation, implementation, audit and accounts and the overall analysis of the success or failure of the formulated policies for bringing about development. In India, due to the adoption of a welfare model of governance, it becomes the primary responsibility of the State to cater to the needs of the common people. The ultimate target revolves around the welfare of the masses. However, there is a wide range of varieties that is engulfed in the term masses demarcated by racial affinities, caste identities, religious factionalism, communal orientations, linguistic Diaspora and ethnic realism, all of which are strongly united by their division into either the wealthy section or the common masses. The policy of development is generally targeted to the upliftment of the common masses where poverty, dejected quality of human life, violation of human rights, violence and ill health taunt their everyday life. One such vulnerable communities of India that require a special care happens to be the scheduled tribe population that comprise up of 8.06% of the total population of India. Right from the pre independence era, special measures have been taken to categorize them as a special group of the Indian population. This was followed by the Five Year Plans that have assigned special economic investments to bring about development of the scheduled tribe communities. The approach adopted in the process of tribal development in India has been derived from the Nehruvian model of middle path of neither complete isolation nor excessive intervention that which was designed almost seven decades ago. However, what was perceived by the policy planners as development was actually a reflection of an attempt of bringing about modernization of the scheduled tribe communities that completely devalued their ethnic indigenous knowledge, culture, leadership and overall lifestyle. The backlash of this attempt of faulty approach and modernization is clearly reflected in the failure of the policies and programmes devised by the intellectual elites for the backward and poor scheduled tribes without realizing their needs, aspirations, beliefs and choices. Such a result is not a shock in itself because history stands as a testament that those developmental policies which exclude the beneficiaries are definite to fail. The case has not been different in case of tribal development in India.

While advocating the meaning of development, one needs to address the goals of development first. Without a vision, the planning and execution of such plans stand to be

faulty which has been reflected in the case of tribal development in India as well. Due to the development in technology, the world today is conceived as a global village where a development of any form be it political, economic or social in any part of the globe is likely to affect the other. In such a situation, the dream of developing all the parts of the globe stands to be important. The United Nations Organization has played an important role in helping the exchange of ideas of development for which they have taken special efforts in keeping track of the scale of development of every country, especially the developing ones. The realization that without the freedom to decide for one's own destiny, development cannot be imposed upon by external intervention, the United Nation Organization in its Vienna Declaration commonly referred to as Right to Development (RTD) as a Human Right, regards this freedom to be fundamental in bringing about qualitative change in the lives of the people. The seventeen Sustainable Developmental Goals (SDGs) commonly referred to as Envision 2030 engulfing the visions of 'No Poverty, Zero Hunger, Good Health and well Being, Quality Education, Gender Equality, Clean Water and Sanitation, Affordable and Clean Energy, Decent Work and economic Growth, Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, Reduced Inequalities, Sustainable Cities and Communities, Responsible Consumption and Production, Climate Action, Life Below Water, Life on Land, Peace Justice and Strong Institutions and Partnership for the Goals.' (www.undp.org) shall act as a development target for every developing country in bringing about development of their countrymen. Tribal development must also be formulated on such global guidelines, not to forget only after consulting the beneficiaries themselves, in order to bring about a global development in the lives of the micro ethnic communities.

In fulfilling this target, the role of the State stands to be very important. However, after the 1990s', with the adoption of the policy of Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization, and Laissez faire or economic freedom, the role of the State was virtually curtailed. The vacuum created was therefore filled in by the third sectors of development commonly referred to as the non-governmental organizations. The primary aim of such organizations was to work on the implementation of the formulated policies of the government in order to bring about the development of the common people. The most important reasons for allowing the non-governmental organizations to fill in the vacuum not only in India but on a global platform was because of its people friendly approach, voluntary nature, grassroot mobilization and the capability to touch on the lives of the needy so that the people could look up to them in the

hour of need, that which the bureaucrats were largely failing on. Depending upon the type of functioning, the non-governmental organizations are categorized into some major groups such as the Human Right NGOs, Environmental NGOs, Rights Based NGOs and Developmental NGOs. With regard to the tribal development, the developmental NGOs have an important role to play in bringing about empowerment of the beneficiaries. This does not mean that the significance of Human Rights be ignored at any cost. The role of the non-governmental organizations in the welfare and development of the tribal communities is very interesting to assert because the time span of the intervention of such non-governmental organizations has now been a long run phenomenon. This definitely demands them to be accountable for their activities in the betterment of the beneficiaries.

Tribal development as a study has now occupied a place of significance because of the plethora of events taking place, affecting the everyday lives of the scheduled tribes that have drawn the attention of the academicians from all across the globe. Due to the rise in the growth of infrastructures that is perceived as development for the masses at the cost of the livelihoods of the minority scheduled tribes leaving them alone to face the problems of displacement, exploitation, inhuman living, trafficking, poverty, ill health, mal nutrition and dejection, the condition of the tribal communities have worsened. In such a situation a close examination at a micro scale is very important not only about those scheduled tribes who are displaced, but on the other hand the condition of the other tribal communities under normal circumstances as well, who are not free from exploitation, poverty and dejection. An overall assessment of the socio-economic condition of the scheduled tribe communities of India does not provide us with a healthy picture. Very often, due to the negligence on the part of the developmental agencies to treat them as respectable human beings has triggered violent acts of protests, movements and terrorism. In order to avoid such untoward incidents, it is important that the underdeveloped scheduled tribe communities be studied from their lenses and their core questions of development be addressed with the help of participatory developmental approach.

The present research work is intended to make a serious attempt to understand the role of the non-governmental organizations in tribal development by taking up a micro level study in the Dooars region of West Bengal since 1991. The Dooars region of West Bengal excluding the Assam belt comprises up of three districts namely Jalpaiguri, Coochbehar and Alipurduar. This area of study is a home to many different scheduled tribe communities that have been

meticulously compartmentalized into two basic groups – the Jhumias (Rabha, Toto, Mechia, Garo, Drukpa) and the Adivasi/ Madhesias (Oraon, Munda, Santhal, Asur, Nagbansi, Horo, Kerketta). The former are still found in the forests, riverbeds and hills with extreme high altitude while on the other hand, the latter are settled in the tea plantation belts primarily working as labourers in the capitalist tea gardens. Interestingly, not a single Jhumia tribe is witnessed to be working in the plantation which acts as a major reason behind their preservation of self reliant source of livelihood in the form of weaving, bamboo product making and collection of minor forest resources. On the other hand, the Madhesia scheduled tribes are completely dependent upon the tea industry for their ultimately source of living with almost no other alternative sources of livelihood where they do not even have the right over land holdings. This demands for a serious intervention of both the governmental and non-governmental sectors to bring about an egalitarian model of development. Although, enough of the mushrooming of the non-governmental organizations have taken place in the study area, yet the impact of their role and functioning still stands to be at a questionable position. The researcher intends to re-examine the meaning of development both from the point of view of the eminent scholars as well as the scheduled tribe themselves and analyze the role of the developmental non-governmental organizations in fulfilling their duties. It tries to take up case study in understanding the role of the non-governmental organizations in tribal development and suggests an alternative approach to bring about development of the scheduled tribes along with some relevant suggestions for achieving the target of development of the scheduled tribes along the lines of Envision 2030.

1.3. UNDERSTANDING THE CORE AREAS

The study of tribal development in India post 1990s demands a serious understanding of the interrelated index terms and its dimensions from all possible dynamics of interpretations. One cannot visualize the problem area without having a sound knowledge about the core issues of development, the changing role of the State in Development, the meaning of tribal development in India, the relevance of the Right to Development as a Human Right, and the Role of the non-governmental organizations in the empowerment of the scheduled tribe populations. Therefore, the researcher has tried to put forward the summary of the above

mentioned core areas from the dimension of tribal development and then in the latter section has drawn a sound relationship between them for a better understanding of the research area.

1.3.1. DEVELOPMENT AND RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT

Development refers to the improvement in a country's economic and social conditions in way of managing an area's natural and human resources with the aim of creating wealth and improving people's lives. Dudley Seers (1969), while elaborating on the meaning of development suggests that while there can be value judgments on what is development and what is not, it should be a universally acceptable aim of development to make for conditions that lead to a realization of the potentials of human personality. Development is a concept and multi-faceted phenomena. Although, its history goes back to the antiquities, development occupied an exceptional position after the Second World War in the late 1940s. Since then there have been efforts for social, political and economic progress all over the world facilitated by the quick technological evolution.

However, development should not be confused with growth. Development differs from economic growth in the sense that development lays emphasis on the condition of production and the betterment of this condition. Brookfield in the year 1975 defined development from a very basic level as 'change'. Robert Chambers (1997) adds to it as 'good change'. The debate between good change and bad change remains open for discussion but the major issue to be discussed here is what Cowen and Shenton (1996) have noted on 'What is intended by Development?' However, in analyzing this question it must be noted that with the passage of time, the concept of development has accrued many different theories, approaches and interests thereby making it a multifaceted phenomenon, not only confining itself to the developing countries, but the geographical areas of the South in comparison to the North. The changing meaning and nature of development over the passage of time has furthermore complicated the conceptualization of the subject. Originally, the idea of development has emerged primarily from economic growth which gradually incorporated the quality of human life, social welfare, political freedom and the enhancement of human capacities in it. "Reflecting these changes, from the late 1980s onwards the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) began to employ the Human Development Index (HDI) as an alternative measure of development to GDP. This is encapsulated in the 2000/2001 Human development Report (UNDP2001)." Hopper (2012). From this perspective, development means 'expanding

the choices people have to lead lives they value' (UNDP 2001:9). The HDI therefore focuses upon the well being of human life by the enhancement of the human capacities by providing better education and a decent standard of living. In his influential book *Development as Freedom*, Amartya Sen (1999) orients development towards enhancing the freedom of human by providing them the choice of opportunities, entitlements and capabilities.

In the conceptualization of development, one must also lay emphasis on the complexities of development. The factors that shape the course of development over a period of time stand out to be as follows- the degree of political stability and social cohesion in the country, the influence of culture and history, the natural resource endowment. Cowen and Shenton (1996) have noted that development 'comes to be defined in a multiplicity of ways because there is multiplicity of "developers" who are entrusted with the task of development. Allen, T. & Allan, T. (2000) has expressed concern that development is increasingly viewed as the practice of development agencies like multilateral organizations, governments, NGOs and social movements that conceptualize development in terms of alleviating problems and setting targets (Ibid:774). Salil Shetty, the Secretary General of Amnesty International has argued that 'we are faced with the contradiction of governments continuing to "violate the human rights of the same people whose lives they have committed to improving under the UN MDG framework". Kelly (2001). Shetty believes that the MDGs and development need to be based upon the principles of accountability and enforceability rather than simply being target oriented.

The Declaration on the Right to Development defines development as a "comprehensive economic, social, cultural and political process, which aims at the constant improvement of the well being of the entire population and of all individuals, on the basis of their active, free and meaningful participation in development and in the fair distribution of benefits resulting therefrom." The process of development that is recognized as a human right is one "in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized." This definition provides us with the interpretation of development from the lenses of human rights.

In order to understand the core elements of the RTD, it is important for us to understand the inscribed articles of this mega declaration which reads out three major principles as: 'a) There is an inalienable human right that is called right to development; b) there is a particular process of economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights

and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized; and c) the right to development is a human right by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to and enjoy that particular process of development.’ Sengupta (2014) (www.un-ilibrary.org).

Therefore, the right to development provides a vision to the goals of the development process which if successfully fulfilled can lead to the development of the people on a global platform.

1.3.2. STATE AND NGOS IN DEVELOPMENT

The publication of the monumental work of Adam Smith in 1776 made it clear to all, that the most important role in the economic development of the country was not played by the state alone, by making it clear to the people the power of the “invisible hand” of the market. The Wealth of Nations strongly criticizes the role of the state in the economic development thereby allocating the status of problem to the government and solution to the market.

The discourse on development policy alongside the issue of state market interaction has posed to be a serious challenge to the academic fraternity particularly after the 1990s era that welcomed the policy of LPG in India. The major debate revolves around the questioning of the agency of development and tries to find a solution as to which agency should be held accountable for bringing about development in the area. The two contrasting stands are backed by two opposite ideas – the first one redeeming the state and its role in directing the development agenda; and the other supporting a market based economic system in tune with economic liberalization. After the report of 1997 published by the World Bank, some considerable amount of convergence has been witnessed between these two contrasting paradigms whereby the state and the market are now not regarded to be in competition with each other but rather have been portrayed as agents of development working side by side in complimentary terms for the achievement of development targets.

The state which was visualized as the conventional agent of change and development has gradually changed hands to globalization, regionalization, international intuitions and the market, who have successfully taken the lead in playing the role of development agencies. The classical understanding of development as equivalent to modernization and catching up with the west or the fairly advanced nations has also been challenged. This is because the

idea of modernity has had a definite impact upon the ecological environment, local culture and cultural diversities.

The curtailment of the powers of the state was neutralized by the intervention of the non-governmental organizations in the implementation of the development policies framed by the government. In the case of India, Pandey (2008) believes that the failure of development programmes run by the governmental agencies, financial irregularities, non-compliance with the time framework, absence of coordination between the local people and the governmental agencies have been some of the primary reasons behind the alarming rate of rise in the number of the non-governmental organizations in India especially in the backward areas. This has earned a prestigious title of the third sector of development to the non-governmental organizations. In the contemporary era, the successful completion of the process of development cannot be expected without the active involvement of the NGOs in the development process. Commonly referred to as voluntary agencies, the non-governmental organizations need to re-qualify themselves in order to maintain the honour bestowed upon them as a powerful agency of development. The role of the developmental non-governmental organizations in the development of the scheduled tribes requires a complete reexamination to draw a sound conclusion which shall be taken up in the present research work.

1.3.3. TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

The Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) states that the largest population of the indigenous people of the world resides in India with eighty million of them scattered across the country closely knit by similar characteristics of socio-political and economic marginalization. The term Scheduled Tribe is used for the purpose of administering certain specific constitutional privileges, protection and benefits for specific section of peoples, historically considered disadvantaged and backward. "The President notifies the Scheduled Tribes in relation to a particular State or Union Territory and not on an all India basis, by an order, after consultation with the state governments concerned. These orders can be modified subsequently to include or exclude, but only through an act of parliament under Clause 2 of the Article." Bijoy, Gopalakrishnan, Khanna (2010).

In India, the tribal population comprises up of 461 groups (according to the *People of India* project) which constitute 8.0% of the total population of the country, which according to the 2001 census numbered to 83,580,634 members. The central belt of India stretching from

Rajasthan and Gujarat in the west to Tripura and West Bengal in the east with states like Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Bihar and Jharkhand at the center is a home to 80% of the total tribal population of the country. States like Sikkim, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Nagaland homes the rest 20%. The largest tribal population in South India is found in Andhra Pradesh. Post 1990s witnessed family and beneficiary oriented development schemes that were expanded to bring about welfare opportunities for the tribes. Large scale projects such as mining, manufacturing units, industrial outlets were also started off which did provide employment to the tribal people to a certain extent. However it is studied that the value of the extracted resources from the tribal areas completely outweighed the funds that the central government and the state government allotted to the development of the area. "There is a substantial net flow of resources from the underdeveloped tribal periphery to the more developed non tribal urban and lowland agricultural centers of the country." Jones (1978).

Right from the initial Five Year Plans, measures for tribal welfare was taken up and so does it continue till today. Keeping aside the British approach and policy of isolation where the tribal groups were kept aside because of the problem of administration, the government of independent India has taken up many projects to bring about development among the tribals. Though the first Prime Minister of Independent India, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru was busy looking into the overall development of India he did not ignore the tribal population as well. He appointed many Commissions and Committees to look into the matter as to how the tribal issues could be solved. Verrier Elwin suggested the Isolationist or the National Park Approach which he later on changed to Integration Approach. Nehru was however not in favour of such extreme policies but instead believed in following the middle path approach.

Post independent India has witnessed the policies and programmes for tribal development based on Nehruvian guidelines. However even after six decades of planned developmental strategies adopted in India, the results or outcomes have not been satisfactory. Unequal rate of development has taken the upper hand because of which rampant inequality amongst the inter tribal groups is witnessed. There has been the presence of a well off group within the same tribal group who have been able to take the advantage of the facilities provided by the government of India for the reserved categories, while on the other hand there is the other group which is still far away, untouched by the blessings of modernity. This is accompanied by rampant corruption, unapproachable bureaucratic system, faulty policies, land distribution

pattern, priority of the people and their lifestyles and the lack of interest of the policy implementers. This has ultimately led to the development of a relationship of the exploiter and the exploited where it is difficult to locate the actual exploiter.

The contemporary era has witnessed multiple problems ranging from displacement to famine like poverty condition of the scheduled tribes in some parts of the country. It would be wrong to generalize and place the scheduled tribes on the same economic strata because due to the diversities in the socio-cultural patterns, their economic standards also vary from each other. However, one cannot underestimate the poverty level of the scheduled tribes in India looking at the Human Poverty Index (HPI) for the scheduled tribes that is estimated at 47.79 which is higher than other communities and the Human Development Index (HDI) is estimated at 0.270 which is lower than the HDI of Scheduled Castes and the non-tribals. The major reason behind such deprived conditions of the scheduled tribes happen to be: land alienation at a rapid rate, disposition of life supporting systems because of displacement, general apathy of the bureaucracy, rise in the atrocities on the tribals, increase in the market forces and lack of success in the planned development efforts.

The Dooars region of West Bengal that falls to the northern part of the state is a home to different indigenous scheduled tribe communities that are economically categorized into two groups of the self reliant Jhumia tribes and the poverty stricken Adivasi tribes completely dependent upon tea plantations and the capitalist market for their survival. In such a situation, it is important to note the success of the governmental policies in bringing about the development of the scheduled tribes. As has been noted earlier, the large scale rise in the number of the non-governmental organizations has also been witnessed in the area of study for bringing about development of the tribal communities of Dooars region. However, the theoretical interpretation cannot be taken alone as a proof about the success rate of tribal development in the area. It is important to note the role of the developmental non-governmental organizations in bringing about the empowerment of the scheduled tribes of the area. In doing so, one cannot ignore the importance of participation of the scheduled tribes in tribal development.

1.3.4. IMPORTANCE OF PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT

The participation of the people occupies a central place in the development thinking of the developing countries. Participation is a commonly understood by all people to engage in

society and in the decisions that have an impact on their lives. It is a political endeavour that challenges operation and discrimination, in particular of the poorest and most marginalized people. Participatory process enables people to see more clearly and learn from the complexity that they are living and working in. Participation makes an attempt to make the poor a part in initiatives designed for their benefit with the expectation that development projects will be more sustainable and successful with the engagement of the local population in the process of development.

“At the dawn of the 21st century, calls for more active engagement of poor people in development have come of age. Participation in development has gained a new respectability and legitimacy, and with the status of development orthodoxy.” Cornwall (2005).

The advocates of Participatory Democracy state that the process of the so called normal development is characterized by biases, Eurocentrism and top-downism which ultimately lead to disempowerment mainly because it sidelined the non expert local resources thereby resulting in limited benefits. As a mark of resentment, eminent scholars like Paulo Freire in the year 1970 advocated participatory action research creating a new environment for people to learn, express and achieve development. Robert Chambers argued that ‘putting the last first’ was necessary for rural development.

Participatory development focuses upon the grass root level of development that permits plurality of goals to be achieved as well as giving access to the local communities the right to self determinism that they require. Here, the role of the non - governmental organizations stands out to be prominent. Besides, the prominence of indigenous knowledge was also granted much more significance to by bringing it parallel to the scientific knowledge. Chambers explains that ‘the essence of participatory rural appraisal is change and reversal – of role, behavior, relationship and learning. Outsiders do not dominate and lecture; they facilitate, sit down, listen and learn. Outsiders do not transfer technology; they share methods which local people can use for their own appraisal, analysis, planning, action, monitoring and evaluation. Outsiders do not impose their reality; they encourage and enable local people to express their own.’ Chambers (1997).

The understanding of the core issues of Development and the Right to Development, role of the state and the non-governmental organizations in development and the importance of participation in development shall now be substantiated with the help of the existing review

of literatures in the above mentioned areas that shall be followed by the pointing of the area that require attention in the future course of study.

1.4. A BRIEF REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Indian tribal societies have been studied under two specific phases - Pre Independence phase and Post Independence phase. The former being conducted by the anthropologists was basically confined to the investigation of the social and cultural aspect of the aboriginals, thereby failing to give due importance to the economic and political dimensions of the area of study. However, the contemporary writings have witnessed a sincere effort in focusing on almost all the neglected, yet vital aspects of tribes and tribal development. The present study is an attempt to examine the role of the non-governmental organizations in the tribal development in India with a special focus on the Dooars region of North Bengal. The study undertakes the examination of the different aspects of development, viz. its theoretical evolution along with its practical achievements especially in the developing countries like India with its center of attention on the development of the tribal communities of the nation. The role of the non-governmental organizations in tribal development cannot be studied in isolation without understanding the structure comprising up of the state, the non-governmental organizations and the tribal beneficiaries.

To seek clarity on the area, the overview of the review of literature in this study can be broadly categorized into three chief categories namely-

- Review of Literature on Non Governmental Organizations and Development;
- Review of Literature on Tribal Development in India;
- Review of literature on the Participation of the People for Development.

1. Review of Literature on **Non Governmental Organizations and Development** where the prominent writings of Mohit Bhattacharya (1987), O.P. Goel (2004), Paul D. Chowdary (1971), Shivani Dharmarajan (1998), V.D. Deshpande (1986), C.P. Bhambri (1987), E.A. Narayana (1990), Shashi Ranjan Pandey (1991), D.L. Sheth and Harsh Sethi (1996), Mohanty (2002) is referred to:

Mohit Bhattacharya (1987) has made an attempt to portray the two major views on the working of voluntary organizations in the year 1987. He believed that there are two types of voluntary organizations – one that has a voluntary social effort in the field of development that demands respect from all. On the other hand, the second category of voluntary organizations generally has a subversive character and consciously makes an effort, “to counteract the influence of left movement among the vulnerable sections of the community.” The key to socio-economic reconstruction, according to Bhattacharya, rests on the restructuring of state power in the third world and not in taming the voluntary agencies to bring about radical social change.

O.P. Goel (2004) in his book *Development of Social System* points out the various areas of work of the Non Governmental Organizations for the improvement of the quality of life of the people by diverse developmental projects such as poverty alleviation programmes, conservation of environment and sustainable development. He makes a clear remark stating that the NGOs have a very less authority in decision making because of the overall control of the government and excessive delay in the passing of projects. He also discusses the various forms of the NGOs and their role in the development of social system.

Paul D. Chowdary (1971) in his volume, *Voluntary Social Welfare in India* (1971) compartmentalized and studied the voluntary agencies at three levels – the national level, local level and the rural level, tracing its origin to the historical development of social welfare in India. He has also made an attempt to compare the works of the voluntary agencies of India with that of the Western countries. His major findings were his identification of five major motivating factors in undertaking voluntary social work ranging from social obligation, religious consideration, political obligation, economic needs and personal needs. N Narayanswami and M.P. Borain (2005) seek to assess the state of the art of Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) among the NGOs in Tamil Nadu with special emphasis on the efficiency of the participatory methods. It tries to find out the problems and challenges encountered by the NGOs in employing PRA methods in rural development work and analyses the steps taken by them to overcome such problems and challenges. It also ascertains the innovations, if any, attempted by the NGOs in the arena of participatory methods.

Shivani Dharmarajan (1998) in her book *NGOs as prime Movers- Sectoral Action for Social Development* has highlighted on the role of NGOs in social upliftment and development. The major sectors that have been discussed elaborately are Human Resource Development (HRD), Poverty Eradication, Health Care, Environmental Protection and Human Rights with special focus on women and children. The author endeavors to create understanding of human centered development by clarifying the extent and intensity to which NGOs can go in attaining integrated social development.

V.D. Deshpande (1986) is of the opinion that in order to achieve the target of development with the help of the non-governmental organizations, it becomes an ardent responsibility to help minimize the problems faced by such organizations. The role of the voluntary agencies must be appreciated at this hour because without a positive approach bestowed upon them, the zeal to work for the upliftment of the needy fades away. The spreading of such voluntary agencies and its multiplication in number is believed to be an indicator of healthy democracy in the country.

C.P. Bhambri (1987) is of the opinion that the emergence of voluntary agencies lies in the incapability of the state in addressing the problems of the vulnerable and the neglected group of the society which need special attention. This task is believed to be well executed by the voluntary organizations by making an attempt to harmonize the society from the clutches of the oppressive, bureaucratized and dehumanized modern state.

E.A. Narayana (1990) believes that the developing countries are in a constant attempt to improve the participation of the people in order to gain the best possible result from the developmental policies and in turn promote democracy. In this process of achieving the target, the voluntary agencies have been looked upon as the agents and instruments of accomplishment of the target by acting as a chief patron of democracy. Voluntarism has thus been assigned the status of a technique as well as an approach. According to Narayana, the major reason behind the bureaucratic nature of the non-governmental organizations lies in its dependence on the government and private organizations for fund.

Shashi Ranjan Pandey (1991) states that, the lack of active and responsive grassroot organizations is the major reason behind the failure of developmental programmes in India. Increased participation of the local people in the development process is facilitated by the

social action groups or the non-governmental organizations which according to him are of three types – service, development and action oriented.

D.L. Sheth and Harsh Sethi (1996) have outlined a brief account of the historical paradigm of the evolution of the voluntary organizations pointing out the mushrooming of the non-governmental organizations that have been accepted as the implementers of development programmes. They are of the opinion that the non-governmental organizations have the capability to establish self governing institutions that has been left open by liberalization and decentralization.

Reviewing the literature on the NGOs, Clarke (1998), Mencher (1999) and Bhagwati (2004) have focused on the definition, classification and profusion of the NGOs all around the world. Bhagwati in his work emphasized on the profusion of NGOs and the role of NGOs in the globalised world. He even goes to the extent of equating a single person in a particular situation to that of an NGO, not to forget the importance of civil society in politics.

K. Ravi (2015) in his book *Tribal Development and Non-Governmental Organizations* believes that there are many non-governmental organizations working for the development of scheduled tribes in India. Taking up micro case studies of the non-governmental organizations working in Adilabad District for tribal development, he is of the opinion that the NGOs widely deal with the development related issues and other such areas. Depending upon the function of specialization of such NGOs, they are seemed to be working in the sectors of health, education and constructions of infrastructures for the betterment of the tribals. An evaluation of the functioning of the NGOs have been done taking into consideration their nature of work, their staff pattern, priorities and the need for continuity of work thereby presenting its strength and weaknesses that needs to be addressed in the better manner.

Mohanty (2002) has extensively dealt with the role and function of the NGOs. Rajasekhar (2002) based his work on the poverty reduction efforts of the NGOs in Tamil Nadu. He made a distinction between the two concepts of poverty reduction and poverty alleviation where the former happens to be a short run process while the latter a long run process.

2. Review of Literature on **Tribal Development in India** where the works of G.S. Ghurye (1959), Haimmendorf (1982), Virginous Xaxa (2008), Sarid Kumar Chaudhuri (2004), Md.

Ayub Mallick (2004), T.B. Subba and Sujit Som (2000), Verrier Elwin (1988), Vidyarthi (1970), Govind Chandra Rath (2008), Dr. S. N. Tripathy (2005), Deepak Kumar Behera and George Pfeffer (1999) occupy a place of prominence.

G.S. Ghurye (1959) in his book *Scheduled Tribes* has made an attempt to understand the problems faced by the primitive tribes in India and their present position by strictly referring to the treatment meted out to them by the British Indian Government. Referring to the reports and recommendations proposed by the anthropologists in this regard, Ghurye ardently believes that the only solution to the problems faced by these backward classes can be found in the process of integration with the other backward classes in order to strengthen the ties between them. To him, the problems of the primitive tribes appear the same as that faced by the depressed classes of the Hindu society who are economically and socially subjugated.

Haimmendorf (1982) in his book *Tribes of India: The Struggle for Survival* has observed the Gond tribes of Andhra Pradesh in order to delineate the success and failure of the governmental policies in the process of tribal development. The social changes that have taken place in the contemporary era has had an impact on the tribals as well, bringing a transition to market economy followed by exploitation, alienation and deprivations of the tribals. The book primarily focuses on the problems of land alienation faced by the Gond tribes alongside the impact of the changing forest policies on the tribal population.

Virginous Xaxa (2008) in his book *State, Society and Tribes: Issues in Post Colonial India* has made a serious attempt to interpret the idea of tribes as a conscious distinct and separate group bearing a distinct identity that was brought into the forefront of modern consciousness by the colonial rulers which was followed by the independent state. He has tried to analyze the development of the tribes of India from a historical point of view pointing out the stages of its development right from the pre-independence era by drawing a clear cut distinction between the two distinct groups of people i.e. the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes generally misunderstood as one. The agenda of tribal development taken up by the state has been compartmentalized by him under the protective safeguards, mobilizational strategies and the developmental measures pointing out the structure of inequality created by the existing development discourse.

Sarid Kumar Chaudhuri (2004) has identified the nature of constraints in the process of tribal development with special references to some of the primitive tribes such as the Totos, Birhors and the Lodhas, thereby suggesting some corrective measures and guidelines for the policies to be implemented in the future action plans to be adopted. He has taken up the parameters of tribal development as the economy, education and health in order to consider a tribal group as developed or the underdeveloped. In doing so, he has also tried to intervene on the role of the voluntary organizations and the Panchayati Raj Institutions that have emerged as important machinery for the implementation of the development programmes on the rural and tribal areas.

Md. Ayub Mallick (2004) in his book *Panchayati Raj and Tribal Development in West Bengal: A Field Study* has made a micro empirical study of the Kansha Block, Burdhan District in order to locate the relationship between grassroot democracy and tribal development. The role of the Panchayati Raj in tribal development in the process of empowerment of the scheduled tribes has been carefully analyzed by pointing out the fact that proper representation of the poor and the needy have not been done under the organs of Panchayati Raj Institutions.

T.B. Subba and Sujit Som (2000) in their edited book *Between Ethnography and Fiction: Verrier Elwin and the Tribal Question*, has made an attempt to analyze the anthropology of Verrier Elwin who happened to be one of the most important experts on tribal policy in the late pre-independence and early post-independence era. The patterns of tribal life and their characteristics today have been carefully interrogated. Arup Maharatna (2005) also thinks on the same line in his book *Demographic Perspectives on India's Tribes* where he points out that due to the rapid changes witnessed in the political, social and cultural dynamics of the contemporary era, the pressure on tribal life has increased in multiples thereby complicating it further. He emphasizes on the importance of the multidisciplinary research in tribal studies.

Verrier Elwin (1988), an outstanding English personality who had come to India to serve as a missionary and later on turned into a pioneer anthropologist, in his book "Tribal world of Verrier Elwin" put forward his ideas and experiences, adjustments and reaction in the remote adivasi villages of India. With his coming in contact with Mahatma Gandhi, the Indian system and patterns and the then National movement and the tribal life transformed Elwin

from a missionary to that of an anthropologist who dedicated his entire life in search of proper approaches to tribal development.

Dr. C. Parvathamma (1984) surveyed the Scheduled Castes and Tribes of Karnataka taking into consideration the socio economic levels as the basis of development. He highlighted the everyday struggle emanating from the social and economic backwardness of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The social inequality strongly interwoven with institutional legitimating right from time immemorial, forced some people to accept their ascribed low social status. These people were later on looked down upon as Scheduled Caste, and thereby allotted them a low social status altogether. Hence, the constitutional provisions and policy formulations are intended to create condition conducive for the establishment of equality.

Kamala Devi Chattopadyaya (1978) made an extensive study on tribalism in India. Her basic focus is on the tribals and their living environment, integration, their myths, rituals, kinship, their festivals, belief in totems and divination to be achieved by sacrifices, their system of marriage, their dialogues, songs, poetry, dance, art, use of symbols, masks etc. Chattopadhaya tried to give an overall difference in the cultural, social and economic patterns of the tribals of India through an ethnographic study.

Vidyarthi (1970) attempted to examine the impact of urbanization on tribal culture. He studied the impact of a heavy engineering complex in a tribal belt of Chotanagpur and analyzed the pattern of socio economic changes that occurred in this region owing to large scale industrialization. Speaking about the process of modernization among the tribal people in India's border, Roy Burman (1973) rightly observes that though the tribals may live alongside the non tribals, they hardly share a common life, with very few and formal contacts. According to him, the tribals in urban areas imbibe a peculiar feature of neither representing any of the two areas i.e. urban or rural lifestyles. With the rise of political consciousness the tribes have come to identify themselves as a significant minority. Burman in his writings expresses his dissatisfaction regarding the strategies for the modernization of the tribals. R.K. Panda (1985) has suggested that before adopting any scheme a comprehensive survey of the region must be conducted and the needs, desires and demand of the people must be understood first. For this purpose, special functionaries should be posted for close and effective supervision of various developmental scheme meant for tribal

development. N.N. Vyas and N.D. Chaudhary (1980) laid emphasis on the Area Development approach for tribal development in India.

K.S. Padhy and Purna Chandra Satapathy (1980) in their book “Tribal India” put forward the argument that modernization is something different and in no way means the loss of one’s traditional and cultural values. Instead modernization means the proper utilization of resources and perfect balance of old and new values. By simply tagging the adivasis as docile, simple, hard working, honest and hospitable, they are actually physically oppressed, socially ostracized, economically exploited and culturally isolated. This exploitation is possible because the exploited tribals are usually politically unconscious due to lack of education to make them understand their rights and duties especially in the political perspective.

Govind Chandra Rath (2008) in his “ Tribal Development In India: The Contemporary Debate” tries to investigate the failure of the welfare models of development as applied to tribal India and the consequent efforts of the tribes to better their groups by seeking political autonomy and the restoration of traditional rights to natural resources like water, forest and land. Various case studies have also been discussed thereby providing a comprehensive understanding of tribal experience of development in India.

D.D. Sharma (1978) studied ‘Tribal Development the Concept and Framework’ with special reference to the Baigas of Bastar District of Madhya Pradesh. Sharma, in his study has laid emphasis on the economic development of the backward tribal regions, forests and the relationship of the tribal people with the forest, industrial complexes and the hinter land of the tribals. The study explains the potentialities of the tribals for development by giving a clear cut picture of the socio- economic life of the tribal people.

Gopal Rao (1978) studied the process of transfer of land from the tribals to that of non tribals because of credit on land. Since land holds a tremendous prestige value especially in the rural context, it would stand as a security for both borrowing and lending. The tribals borrowed money keeping their land as security and since in most of the cases they could not pay back the amount, the land was seized by the lender. Since most of these lenders were non-tribal people, land was gradually transferred from the tribals to the non-tribals. Similarly, M.K. Patel (1974) focused primarily on land problems of the tribals. He stated that during the 17th and 18th centuries there were many tribal kingdoms in India. With the passage of time, the

expansion of the more advanced groups forced the tribals to retreat into the nearest hills and less fertile areas. The dispossession of tribal lands continued even during the British period because of which a large number of tribes were reduced to agricultural labourers which made their economic condition deplorable. Hence, for generations the tribal people have continued to practice their subsistence agriculture, thereby earning their living as serfs and bonded labourers.

Sukant K Chaudhury and Soumendra Mohan Patnaik (2008) in their edited volume “Indian Tribes and the Mainstream” presented a critique to the prevalent dichotomy between the mainstream of Indian Society and tribal cultures. The question that is raised here is on the very issue of the prevalence of such dichotomy and its impact on the socio- political reality of the nation. An attempt to move beyond the prevailing approaches is suggested which would help in solving the problems of cultural boundaries. They emphasized on the structure and process of tribal society- their problems, policies, transformation, ethnic discourse and their future.

S. N. Tripathy (2005) has taken a close look into the vital causes behind the sufferings of the tribal population. The reason behind misery of the universe have been pointed out to be non recognition of rights over resources and restriction on their use, alienation of tribals from the means of production, denial of due entitlement of labour , leakages of investible resources in tribal regions etc. The author points out the real cause behind tribal upheavals and movements that engulfed not only a particular zone but instead on a national scale. In fact the basic denial of rights to the tribal population followed by domination and second class citizen like behavior meted out to the above stated universe has been discussed as the prime factors behind tribal unrest which ultimately take some form or the other .

Deepak Kumar Behera and George Pfeffer (1999) in their book *Contemporary Society: Tribal Studies, Vol. III*, draws a number of social scientist together into a common scholarly quest for the understanding of different aspects of tribal society. It documents the said aspects of tribal communities through the contribution of many eminent social scientists of India and abroad. The papers in this volume has been presented under three sections, viz. 1) Kinship and domestic groups 2) Ethnicity uprising and revivalism and 3) Community life. Georg Pfiffer has tried to provide a comprehensive account of the kinship vocabulary of two

southern Munda languages i.e. Gutols and Remo. Similarly other vital aspects of tribal studies have been expressed in detail.

A.R.N. Srinivastava (1990) focused on the impact of globalization in the form of rapid growth of industrialization on tribal ownership of land as the demand for land and other natural resources increased leading to displacement and deprivation of the aboriginals. The loss of land itself carries a massive impact as it signifies a lot to them representing their homeland, ways of life, social network and in turn the overall identity, thereby weakening the group itself. The constant exploitation of the tribal people with the absence of any proper plans and programmes to rehabilitate the victims by the concerned agencies have further agonized the tribal people. Hence, the author stresses on the urgent need for suitable programmes to reach out to the victims.

Rudolf C. Heredia and Rahul Srivastava (1994) have made an ethnographically strong work by raising the fundamental questions keeping in mind the changing scenario of tribal living by sorting out the problematic concepts and contexts. The question of tribal identity and dignity has been methodically analyzed in their work.

Ajit K. Singh (1984) directly hits on the question as to why in spite of the unending efforts of the government in developing the tribal communities, very little positive change has been brought about in their practical life. The author has tried to make an enquiry behind the slow movement of governmental policies and the reasons behind their failure. The problems faced by the tribes and the measures used to tackle them have been discussed in detail, ultimately blaming the Community Development Programmes of being politically guided to be the major cause of failure of the government.

Dean Joros (1973) in his study presents his view on the relation between the political socialization of the tribals and the integration process or the effect of tribal welfare programmes on political socialization. He reveals that by analyzing the socialization process of the tribals, a more complete evaluation of the tribal welfare programme would be ensured. This view is also explained by Mathur (1977) where he points out that induction into political culture and integration into the main stream of national life are part of the one and the same process and that without political socialization being achieved the integration of the tribes into the main national stream is impossible.

Rucha S. Ghate (1992), G. Anand (2015) and R.S. Mann (2008) have studied the economic impact of the changing forest policy on the tribal people dwelling in the forests that generally believe in conservation of the forests through sustainable development. Since women are the chief caretakers of nature, they happen to be the worst sufferers of the irrational application of forest laws by the generally corrupt forest officials. They have tried to analyze the response of the tribal people to the changing forest policies and have also tried to formulate a long term and cordial relationship between the governmental forest policies and the economic upliftment of the tribal people.

3. Review of literature on **the Participation of the People for Development**. The understanding of development would be faulty if we fail to give due recognition to the involvement of the beneficiaries or the people for whom the entire programme of development is designed. It has been witnessed that such a model of development that has failed to take the beneficiaries into confidence has in the long run miserably failed in the achievement of the development target. Therefore, this gives us the reason to review the pre-existing literatures on participation and development. Mention must be made about the writings of scholars like *M. Kramar (1969)*, *Amit Bhaduri and Md. Anisur Rehman (1982)*, *S.N. Mishra, Kushal Sharma and Neena Sharma (1984)*, *Ramaswamy Roy (1993)*, *G. Palanithurai (1996)* and *P.K. Bajpai (1998)*.

Ralpa M. Kramar (1996) believes that maximum feasible participation of the poor is the only weapon of combating war on poverty which was his findings from his empirical study of four countries housing nine communities. In an effort to comparatively analyze the process of community development amongst the ethnic minorities with low income that are generally left out of the decision making process, Kramar found out that without participation of the people the policy was most likely to be futile.

S.N. Mishra, Kushal Sharma and Neena Sharma (1984) have provided a theoretical framework for the achievement of development through participation and strategies of participation by using the developmental framework. They have focused primarily on institution building, social development, political participation and participation through voluntary actions. It is believed that the participation of the people in the process of development can only be achieved through voluntary actions of the beneficiaries.

Amit Bhaduri and Md. Anisur Rehman (1982) have observed the experiences of Tanzania, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Papua Neugainea, Chile and Pakistan in the process of rural development. This case study portrays the fact that participation at the bottom level is of prior importance for bringing about development at the rural level.

Ramaswamy Roy (1993) has divided the idea of participation into five compartments such as paradox of democracy, contrasting perspectives on participation, kratos versus demos, participation versus plebiscite and system overload and participation. Structurally, Roy regards that popular participation in the governmental process is not possible and that further transformation of formal democracy into real democracy participation of the people is a necessity which means the control over decisions of the people must rest on the people.

G. Palanithurai (1996) has tried to gather the idea of development in India by clearly underlining the importance of participation of people in the development process. He has made an attempt to highlight on the dimensions of development from the lense of the efforts made by the government in bringing about development where the prime factor of participation is clearly pointed out by him.

P.K. Bajpai (1998) is of the opinion that rural development programmes have failed because of the lack of people's participation due to the impact of over bureaucratization and imposition of rules from above. Therefore, the policy programmes of development must always focus on the participation of the people in making it successful.

Ramesh K Arora (2001) believes that there is a need to restructure the system of governance into a more people friendly approach so as to make it responsive to the needs of the people. In order to encourage the movement of the people to the centre from the periphery, Arora demands for the evolution of a people friendly administrative culture which would involve the participation of the people in the process of policy formulation, implementation and evaluation of the schemes of the government. This requires a change in the attitudes of both the governing and the governed.

Balarammulu (2002) has focused on the rural development experience of Andhra Pradesh and thereby examined the various dimensions of participatory development by pointing out the schemes and programmes undertaken by the State and the non-governmental organizations. He believes that the people for whom the programmes of development are structured should

definitely be involved in its planning as well as execution. Adequate financial resources must be provided to the grassroots so that proper training of local leadership, utilization of technology and an overall qualitative human development target is achieved.

Jean Drize and Amartya Sen (2002) have tried to explore the role of the people in the elimination of deprivation and the expansion of human freedom in India by drawing out the relationship between participation and inequality. One of the most important characteristics of a good society is to allow the participation of the people in the social decision making process through the freedom of choice.

Having studied the various literatures on tribes, tribal development and the role of the NGOs in development and the importance of peoples participation for the empowerment of tribal population, one can draw the conclusion that though there have been made a notable amount of work on the different aspects of tribal problem from that of socio cultural, political and economic perspectives, yet a lot needs to be done keeping in mind the changing scenario and the demands of the subject. Not much has found on the area of our study i.e. the Dooars region of North Bengal which is a home to a large section of the tribal population of West Bengal. Hence, this demands for a serious research work to make an honest attempt to study the role of the Non Governmental Organizations in the development of tribes in the Dooars region of North Bengal.

1.5. RESEARCH GAP & NECESSITY FOR THE PRESENT RESEARCH

After having closely studied the works of the eminent scholars on the above mentioned areas, it is important to note the fact that the area of tribal development and the role of the non-governmental organizations in tribal development with the help of participatory approach on the lines of the freedom of choice have been underrated. Most of the works on tribal development have generalized the idea of scheduled tribes as one single homogeneous group thereby adding more complexities to the study area. . Most of the published works generally focus on tribal communities as a whole in spite of realizing the fact that they do not belong to one particular homogenous group. They are in fact heterogeneous aboriginal groups which have been left unattended to in most of the cases. Furthermore, it has been seen that no serious works on the role of the non-governmental organizations in the development of the

tribes of the Dooars region of North Bengal with a participatory approach has been conducted so far. This has opened the avenues for conducting a research in the study area of the literature-wise neglected zone of the Dooars, which is a home to innumerable scheduled tribe communities of the nation which demands the serious attention of the researchers, policy framers and the bureaucrats. The understanding of tribal development with reference to the parameters propounded by the United Nations on the Right to Development as Human Right shall mark to be the base of the study because without the right to choose for oneself, development stands to be incomplete. Therefore, due to the absence of some pertinent work on tribal development with special emphasis to the ecological, cultural and social development, this research work tries to make an attempt to closely look into the issue and generate plausible remedies to the existing loopholes.

The policy programmes formulated for the development of the scheduled tribe communities of India have been based on the approaches of the Nehruvian model of governance that believes in the middle path of neither complete isolation nor complete acculturation to the mainstream development process. This has been witnessed to have failed in bringing about the desired result of qualitative human development alongside economic growth of the scheduled tribes which is a clear indication of the failure of the policies developed on the lines of the existing approach to tribal development. The absence of participation of the beneficiaries in the policy formulation, implementation and analysis of the overall process of development marks to be a strategic point of disintegration. This urges the researcher to conduct an in-depth study of the meaning of development through the lenses of the scheduled tribes themselves and search for an alternative approach for bringing about qualitative development of the scheduled tribes on the lines of the Right to Development as a Human Right by replacing the outdated existing approach to tribal development in India.

Due to a massive scarcity in the absence of concrete literatures on tribal development in the Dooars region with special emphasis on the role of the non-governmental organizations in itself highlights on the huge research gap that needs to be filled in by committed research work and also provides us with the necessity of addressing the research gap with the help of our intended research of looking into the role of the NGOs in tribal development in the Dooars region of West Bengal since 1991.

1.5.1. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Apart from the traditional approaches to tribal development in India like the Political approach, British administrative approach, Anthropological approach, Gandhian Workers approach, Missionary approach etc. to the development of the tribes of India, the major approaches that needs to be addressed are – the Nehruvian approach and the Elwinian approach. To Nehru, development meant an end to poverty, ignorance and inequality of opportunities. He believed that the indigenous tribes should not be kept as mere anthropological specimens for study but should also be protected from exploitative outside society by gradual interference of the state alongside all the philanthropic overtones. The second approach propounded by Verrier Elwin is commonly known as Leave Them Alone /Isolationist Approach i.e. letting the tribals live on their own lines. This approach of Elwin when criticized by the main stream nationalists such as Ghurye who considered the tribals as the Backward Hindus was gradually molded to the Assimilations approach. Elwin in his later years clarified that he was not in favour of the complete isolation of the aboriginal tribes of India.

Realizing the loopholes of the above mentioned approaches, this research work does not bank upon any of the approaches stated above because each approach when analyzed in detail is not free from discrepancies. The application of each approach has been studied and it has been made clear that these approaches do not suffice the need of the hour. Taking into consideration the role of the NGOs in tribal development we propose to stand by an alternative approach to tribal development whereby we hope to bring about an economically self reliant sustainable development of the people of the proposed area of study. This shall be referred to as the Structurationist Approach. Transcending the dualism of structure and agency, Prof. Anthony Giddens developed his theory of Structuration where the Structure and Agency to Giddens are mentally related or ontologically intertwined and comprise a duality. The structure and the agency are like the two faces of the same coin where mutual harmony between the two is important for the collaborative functioning of each other. This shall be elaborated in detail in our core chapters.

1.5.2. RESEARCH PROBLEM

The rise in the number of the non-governmental organizations working in the different avenues of the developmental projects, stand to testify their existence as a facilitator and a

catalyst of development in order to serve the needy beneficiaries better in those areas where the governmental mechanisms have failed to reach. The non-governmental organizations with their experiences in the grassroots have emerged as powerful actors, as project designers, facilitators and implementers in helping the state with the disbursement of its duties on the one hand and on the other helping the people to empower themselves and become self-reliant. The emergence of the non-governmental organizations as a voluntary organization traces its roots right before the pre-independence era in the Indian context. However, gradual transformation has taken place in the visions and missions of such non-governmental organizations from charity to developmental welfare functions. The role of the non-governmental organizations in achieving their philosophical missions needs to be re-examined in the contemporary era.

The paradox of tribal development is that, the welfare measures are projected and to some extent they stand as measures intended to homogenize and detribalize the tribals. The tribal population in India settled in different regions is also seen to be experiencing the complexities that have emerged with them as an impact of being integrated within the discourse of state-led development. However, the gradual failure of the state to facilitate development along with the changes in the discourse of development has allowed the non-governmental organizations to act as the facilitators of development especially in the tribal regions. The problem of the research area happens to be not just the improper implementation of the governmental policies but the presence of large-scale proxy non-governmental organizations who are found in the official records but are completely absent in the work area. This requires both the agencies of development i.e. the non-governmental organizations as well as the state to play an integral role in delivering quality development to the tribal communities. Development cannot be understood as a one-way process where, like it or not, the policies perceived by the agencies of development as something good are imposed upon the beneficiaries. On the other hand, it goes side-by-side parallel like the tracks of the railways where the feedback and the opinion of the beneficiaries through participation are most important. This failure of channelization of the opinions of the scheduled tribes has been witnessed as the chief reason for all lopsided complications that have been cropped up in the process of tribal development. Therefore, in order to bring about a self-reliant model of development of the agencies, a special position should be granted to them in the governing structure.

With this background in mind, the researcher intends to study the role of the non-governmental organizations in the development of the tribal communities of the Dooars region of West Bengal that comprises up of three major districts of Jalpaiguri, Coochbehar and Alipurduar. The major reason behind focusing on this region is the absence of a healthy number of studies on the area on the role of the non-governmental organizations in bringing about development of the scheduled tribes. Apart from this, the strategic geographical location bordering the foreign land of Bhutan as well as the neighboring state of Assam not to forget the chief connecting route of the North-east India with the mainland gives us plenty of reasons to understand the aspirations of the scheduled tribes who have not got their due share in the process of development. The emerging crisis faced by the area of study especially in terms of economic degeneration has resulted in widespread outmigration with its immediate impacts in the form of human trafficking, child labour, domestic violence, kidnapping and abduction and the violation of human rights at a large scale. To prevent such inhuman activities, a large number of non-governmental organizations have emerged shielding themselves as the protectors of the weak. However, not many such cases are reported in the police stations because of multiple factors such as inefficiency of the police personnel, discouragement and instilling of fear by them on the victims, social shaming, lack of awareness, poverty and illiteracy. In such a situation the researcher intends to question the role of the non-governmental organizations in empowering the scheduled tribes of the region.

1.5.3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The following three objectives are placed for study and evaluation in the due course of the research work:

- The research work aims to understand the meaning and model of development implemented on the tribal communities of the Dooars of West Bengal. It tries to understand the idea of development as perceived by the beneficiaries i.e. the tribal population and then analyze it with the models of development as implemented by the agencies, i.e. the government. The concept of development would be dissected and attempts will be made to understand it from the practical point of view by taking into consideration the Right to Development as human rights approach, the capacity building approach and other such vital parameters of development rather than simply understanding from the theoretical stand point.

- Secondly, this research work will try to look into the role and functioning of the non-governmental organizations in the achievement of the targets as set by the governmental bodies for the implementation of the policies formulated by the latter in the development of the tribal communities. It also tries to see whether the coming in of the NGOs have really helped in the achievement of sustainable model of development of the area or whether its presence has only made the local people furthermore dependent upon external help eternally.
- Lastly, this research work aims to compare and analyze the prevailing theories and models of development. By taking up vital case studies both at the local and national level, we aim to look into the models of development as implemented in India, find out its loopholes and feasibilities, and if required suggest an alternative theory/ model of development taking into consideration the bottom up approach.

1.5.4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

On the basis of the above mentioned discussions, we have generated the following major research questions for our research work:

- 1) Have the developmental non-governmental organizations succeeded in achieving the target of development and empowerment of the scheduled tribe communities of the area?
- 2) Have the developmental policies formulated by the state been able to meet the demands of the tribal people or is there a necessity to reframe the approaches to the policies of development of the tribal people by incorporating them in the process of development through healthy participation?
- 3) In the due course of the failure of the non-governmental organizations to achieve their target of development, shouldn't the government conduct field based audits and accounts of the non-governmental organizations so as to trace the proxy non-governmental organizations and make them accountable for the wrong utilization of the government funds? And,
- 4) What would be the role of the beneficiaries in the process of development so as to achieve a self reliant model without the aid and assistance of the developmental agencies in the long run where they would be free to decide for themselves?

1.5.5. HYPOTHESIS

Seeking the help of Envision 2030 as our target goal for the development of the scheduled tribes in bringing about qualitative human development alongside the economic growth, we intend to study the role of the non-governmental organizations in the development of the tribal communities of the area. In doing so, we have drawn the following two hypothesis for the acceptance or the rejection of either of the Null or the Alternative hypothesis in the due course of the research work. The hypothesis stands to be as follows:

- The NGO intervention in the tribal areas of Dooars region is successful enough in bringing about sustainable and self reliant participatory development of the beneficiaries i.e. the tribal population. The policies adopted need not require changes and the target of implementing the right to development has been satisfactorily implemented on the tribal population of the Dooars region. (Ho)

- The NGO intervention in the tribal areas of Dooars region have not been able to secure a sustainable, man- nature friendly self reliant model of development of the beneficiaries of the area. The principles and policies of development adopted by the State as well as the NGOs stand to be inadequate to suffice the need of the hour which is not just economic self sufficiency but cultural, environmental and social protection of the tribal population of the Dooars region. (HA)

1.5.6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology of research adopted in conducting this qualitative study is **snowball sampling survey** method. The area of research that we have taken up is the Dooars region of West Bengal. This research work tries to analyze the role of the non-governmental organizations in the development of the scheduled tribes of the Dooars region of North Bengal since 1991 not from the view point of studying the functioning of few non-governmental organizations on individual basis but from a holistic perspective from the lenses of the role of the non-governmental organizations as an institution like the State, thereby taking up the institutional dimension of understanding. Therefore, the idea is to observe the role of the non-governmental organizations in the tribal development of the

Dooars as a whole and not to confine the study to the appreciation or criticisms of individual non-governmental organizations. The main objective is to delve into the deeper layers of questions that generally lie hidden - about how do the tribes themselves understand and interpret development and the role of the non-governmental organizations in development of the scheduled tribes.

The **research design** that we have adopted in the due course of research is **multilayered sample survey** where first of all the location for the survey was carefully chosen by following three major principles. The first location catered to those areas where a majority settlement of the Jhumia scheduled tribes were found; the areas of Buxa, Totopara, Mechia Busty and Mendibari stand to be the representatives of such a location. The second location represent the area where we find a majority of the Adivasi/ Madhesia settlement for which we have chosen Mechpara Tea Garden to serve our purpose. The third location represents both the Jhumia and the Adivasi/ Madhesia settlements along with the non-tribals together. In doing so, we have carefully chosen the villages of Uttar and Madhya Haldibari of the Kumargram Block to conduct our survey.

The choosing of correct sample size is another crucial hurdle in the process of conducting a survey because the extremes of too many or too little fail to justify the entire research itself. With due recognition to the qualitative character of the research, we have taken the help of Bryman and Cramar (1994) in selecting the proper size of the samples for survey. Using the formula $\text{True Sample Size} = (\text{Sample Size} \times \text{Population}) / (\text{Sample Size} + \text{Population} - 1)$, we attain 21.551 respondents from each village. For the sake of convenience, we have increased the sample size to twenty five respondents from each village thereby summing up to one hundred and fifty respondents from all the six areas.

Considering the nature of the research problem as stated above, we have adopted an analytical, exploratory and descriptive method of study. The present study is a field based study and the data has been collected from the field through the administration of structured schedules to the respondents and the conduct of interviews and household surveys in the selected cases. Furthermore an extensive analysis of documents, reports, newspaper clippings, newsletters has been consulted. Several rounds of discussions have been conducted in the form of in-depth interviews both structured and semi structured participant observation etc. to draw a genuine conclusion. Various libraries such as the Central Library of Allahabad

University, Banaras Hindu University, Ranchi University, North Bengal University, West Bengal State Archives, National Library Kolkata, have been visited for collecting the empirical and secondary materials. The fact findings have been obtained through a synthesis of both qualitative and quantitative methodologies adopted in the process. The findings of the research have been portrayed with the help of empirical diagrams and charts for drawing a better understanding about the area.

1.6. ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

The research work entitled *State, NGOS and Tribal Development: A Study in Dooars Region of West Bengal with Special Reference to the Role of the Non Governmental Organizations Since 1991*; tries to study the role of the non-governmental organizations in the empowerment of the scheduled tribe communities of the study area i.e. the Dooars region of North Bengal. In outlining the framework of the thesis, we have divided the research work into seven core chapters which shall be of immense help in situating the theoretical understanding of the core ideas of development, role of the non-governmental organizations in development, tribal development, participatory approach to development and the right to development by gracefully contextualizing it in the background of the Dooars region of North Bengal.

Chapter One entitled *Introductory Notes* provides us with an insight into the thesis by addressing the major conceptual clarifications that are required for delving deeper into the question of tribal development and then the analysis of the role of the non-governmental organizations in the fulfillment of its duties. This chapter introduces the readers to the diversified theoretical areas that require individual attention for its solution. The researcher has attempted to carefully introduce the topic by sensitively linking up the major areas of attention and put forward a meaningful gist of the entire research work. We have placed an extensive review of literature by categorically compartmentalizing the available literature into four strong groups in order to draw the attention of the readers. This has helped us in pointing out the major research gap that demands the necessity of conducting this research work. A logical rationale along with the conceptual framework and the scope of the study has also been provided in the chapter. This has been followed by the research problem and the objectives of the research along with the research questions that has been addressed in the

upcoming chapters. The researcher has tried to point out the two major hypotheses that have been taken into consideration for drawing a conclusion from the findings of the field survey. An elaborate research methodology has been provided in the chapter so as to get a clear picture about the method incorporated in conducting the study.

Chapter Two entitled *Conceptualizing Development and the Role of the NGOS in Development* has tried to address the basic conceptual clarifications that are mandatory to be understood clearly before delving deeper into the aspects of research analysis. The chapter begins with the basic understanding of development where we have tried to trace the meaning, conceptualization and significance of the term in both its narrow and broader dimensions. It has been pointed out that development is not a one-dimensional subject and hence cannot be studied in isolation. On the other hand it stands to represent a holistic notion thereby making it very clear that the mere focus on economic growth would somewhat be incomplete. On the other hand social, political and environmental betterment is equally important which therefore calls for a welfare model of development where the human element needs to be addressed properly. The thin line between growth and development has also been technically studied in this chapter. Furthermore, development as a subject has been briefly outlined from a historical perspective thereby pointing out the changing dimensions of development. The social welfare measure of development such as human rights and participatory development that has added the idea of social welfare in the subject has also been discussed at length. The close relationship between development and the right to development especially after the glorious international declarations to bring about freedom and security of the capabilities for a better standard of living etc. has been pointed out. This is very much significant because without having a sound parameter of development at the international forum, it becomes difficult to assess the level of development. The rise in the growth of the non-governmental organizations and the major reasons behind their growth has also been discussed in this chapter at length.

Chapter Three entitled *State Policies on Tribal Development since 1991 Onwards*, makes a modest attempt to analyze the policies adopted by the state in the development of the Scheduled Tribes of India since the pre independence era till date using the help of the Planning Commission(which has now been replaced by the NITI Aayog) under the Five Year Plans. For meeting the targets of development, it is very important to plan out the policies that appear to be helpful in bringing about development of the beneficiaries. The policies for

tribal development have been operative since the initial Five Year Plan and continue to do so till date. This chapter tries to analyze some of the major policies that have been incorporated for the development of the scheduled tribes of India. In doing so, we have tried to make a theoretical distinction between the state and the government so that one may not confuse the two terms as one. We have proceeded further by tracing the role of the state in the genesis of tribal studies that have helped us to re-examine the approaches adopted in the process of tribal development from a historical point of view. The philosophies of Nehru and Elwin have been discussed at length for understanding the present policies of tribal development. We have also made an effort to propose an alternative approach to tribal development in this chapter. A length of the constitutional provisions or the constitutional safeguards has been provided so as to update the readers about the existing safeguards guaranteed by the constitution to the scheduled tribe communities of the nation. In the analysis of the policy programmes for tribal development, the researcher has made an attempt to outline the study into two major groups: i) Programmes directly benefitting the tribes and ii) Programmes indirectly benefitting the tribes. The policies of the state have been carefully studied under the Five Year Plans from the First Five Year Plan 1951 to the Seventh Five Year Plan that came to an end in the year 1990. The major focus of attention of the research has been granted to the policies of development for the scheduled tribes since 1991 because of which we have laid emphasis upon some of the important programmes on an individual basis. However, it is to be noted that not all the policies have been elaborated thereby laying emphasis on those alone that are significant in the process of tribal development. Therefore, this chapter is more of a summary of the existing policies of the government devised for the development of the scheduled tribe communities of the country.

Chapter Four bearing the title *Situating Tribal Problems in the Dooars and the Role of the NGOS in Addressing it*, moves forward by introducing the area of study i.e. the Dooars region of North Bengal by providing the historical background and geographical characteristics of the area. Since the Dooars region comprises up of three large geographical districts, which prove as a challenge to cover the entire area in the due course of the survey, we have carefully chosen six different geographical locations for our field survey. The list of the areas have been selected with care and attention so that it may provide us with heterogeneity, maximum tribal settlements and most important of all the presence of the non-governmental organizations in the area. We have provided an ethnographic account of the

different scheduled tribe communities residing in the selected area of study. It is to be noted that the study that we have conducted in trying to figure out the role of the non-governmental organization in tribal development shall not assess the functioning of individual non-governmental organizations prevalent in the area but on the other hand shall study the non-governmental organizations as an institution, the assessment of which shall be taken up by the researcher. The chapter concludes with the summary of some of the non-governmental organizations assumed to be present in the study area.

Chapter Five tries to make a serious analysis from the information gathered from the field thereby situating the role of the non-governmental organizations in the context of tribal development in the Dooars region since 1991. This chapter is completely dedicated to the field survey thereby making an attempt to gather first hand information about the area, the problems and crisis faced by them and most important of all the approach of the non-governmental organizations in addressing them. In presenting the major findings, we have used the help of figures, tables and charts for a better understanding. The quantitative information about the research area has been calculated using the help of the Chi Square test and the co-relation co-efficient test. A special questionnaire has been prepared to gather honest information from the respondents about their opinions on development, the approach to tribal development and the role of the non-governmental organizations in tribal development of the area. The use of audio recorders proved to be of immense help in gathering information especially from those respondents who shy away from responding because of the fear of untoward impact of speaking to an outsider. A consolidated data has been provided first in order to have an idea about the viewpoints of the one hundred and fifty respondents about the vital issues. This has been followed by individual case studies of all the six areas where the major findings and suggestive measure have been provided in order to maintain the heterogeneity of every tribal area. The chapter is concluded by the statistical explanation using the help of the above mentioned tools of statistical calculations.

Chapter Six is dedicated to the summary and conclusion of the thesis by carefully drawing all the major points by linking them up in the understanding of the role of the non-governmental organizations in tribal development. We have put forward the crisis of tribal development and the role of the non-governmental organizations in addressing it. Furthermore, the remedial measures for bringing about successful implementation of tribal development projects have also been highlighted. Mention must be made about the

significance of participation in the developmental approach, formulation of all tribal developmental units with inclusive tribal membership, formation of the non-governmental organizations with majority tribal membership, importance of audit of the non-governmental organizations at the field along with the introduction of the system of punishment and reward, can be pointed out as some of the major remedial measures for achieving the desired target of Envision 2030 on tribal development.

The conclusion is followed by an in-depth bibliography and the raw data for a better understanding for those interested in delving deeper into the core question which the thesis tries to address in its title State, NGOS And Tribal Development: A Study In Dooars Region Of West Bengal With Special Reference To The Role Of The Non Governmental Organizations Since 1991.