

CHAPTER: 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

‘Progress of human well-being is measured by its longevity, knowledge, and income. Knowledge and good health are important for the formation of human capabilities and income supports people’s capabilities to enlarge their choices’ (UNDP, 1990, p. 10-12). Though there has been considerable progress in health, education, etc., the main challenge before any government in developing countries still remains the upliftment of socio-economic status of its population in general and that of the indigenous population in particular. Cross country experience shows that the benefits of development are not evenly distributed across different groups of people. According to *Human Development Report* (2016), the level of development achieved by different social groups are not the same and there are some well identified marginal groups within the society who continue to suffer due to such disadvantages. Gaps still persist among different groups of people in having access to livelihood, healthcare and productive assets. Of them, the indigenous communities more commonly known as ‘Scheduled tribes’ (ST) or ‘tribal’ in India are one of the marginal and disadvantaged groups who continue to suffer due to lack of adequate development. Globally indigenous communities account for a sizeable proportion of the population and constitute almost 10 percent of the world’s poor (UNDP, 2016, p. 63-64; WSSR, 2016, p. 80). Hence, a prerequisite condition for the success of development policies is that such policies adequately address the development need of the indigenous communities.

The marginalisation of indigenous people is mainly due to growing poverty and inequality. One notion of development as suggested by Kuznets through his empirical studies was that gap between rich and poor in any country tends to grow with the country’s growth unless such dynamic growth is not spread to backward areas. This gives greater impetus to growing inequality. Rather, growth which starts at one area can be spread to rest of economy through a variety of linkages. Such growth may

increase inequality in the beginning but in a later stage, inequality will decline if this growth is linked with rest of the economy particularly economy of backward areas. However, these linkages must be strong. The similar notion of development can be applied to explain the situation that prevails among those countries with growing economy but dismal social situation particularly disadvantaged population as such indigenous people. These communities are marginally linked with the modern and dynamic growth in an economy. No doubt, growth often leaves behind some areas but if this growth cannot link the left behind areas in the later stage, then inequality is likely to rise. Hence, with poor linkages, the more the country's growth increases, the greater would be the inequality between indigenous peoples and rest of the population (Morley, 2008, p. 188-189).

According to 2011 census, the scheduled tribe in India constitutes 104.5 million populations which represent 8.6 percent of the country's total population. The highest percentage of tribal is found in rural areas and only 10.3 percent of tribal lives in urban areas (Census, 2011). The proportion of tribal in the country showed an increasing trend since 1951. The tribal population had increased from 22.5 million in 1951 (Singh, 2003, p. 2) to 67.8 million in 1991 and then further to 104.2 million in 2011. This increase is not only due to increase in population growth but also the inclusion of more individual or communities to scheduled tribes list. The states like Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal have a sizable number of tribal populations (Census 2001 & 2011).

Majority of tribal in the country are found to live in vulnerable condition, poverty, poor access to education and suffer from ill-health and malnutrition. In every planning period, the development of such vulnerable sections of the population has been the priority. In the last plan document, which aims for faster, more inclusive and sustainable growth, the target was to make this growth inclusive of marginalised and disadvantaged section of the society. However, even after seven decades of independence, a gap still persists in terms of human development indices between scheduled tribe and rest of the population (GoI, 2004, p. 476; GoI, 2016-17, p. 47; GoI, 2012-13, p. 228-233). The

pace of decline in poverty among tribal is much slower compared to other social groups and poverty gap still persists. In 2004-05, the poverty gap between tribal and others was 35.7 percent in rural areas and 19.2 percent in urban areas. In 2009-10, poverty gap was 26 percent in rural areas and 16.9 in urban areas. This means that decline in poverty gap was not significant [1] (GoI, 2013, p.94).

Although literacy rate among the scheduled tribes in India has increased from 8.53 percent in 1961 to 58.96 percent in 2011, the problem of high dropout rate continues to plague tribal education in India. For the year 2010-11, the gross enrolment ratio (GER) of the tribal student was 137 percent in the primary, 88.9 percent in the upper primary, 53.3 percent in the secondary and 28.8 percent in the higher secondary level. While for all categories, the GER was 116 percent at primary, 85.5 at upper primary, 65 at secondary and 39.3 at a higher secondary level for the year 2010-11. This shows that percentage of tribal student enrolment is high at primary level but it declines in the attainment of higher education as compared to other categories. The dropout rate among ST students is much higher than the overall dropout rate in the country [2]. There are several reasons for the condition of tribal education. Most tribal being located in rural and remote areas, absenteeism of teachers in the school have increased while in many areas there are no schools. Language barriers for tribal students and lack of basic skills in arithmetic are other reasons (GoI, 2013, p. 17-18; GoI, 2014, p. 182-186).

With regard to health status, infant and child mortality rate among the ST has improved. However, a large gap of 27 percent exists in case of infant mortality rate and almost 39 percent in case of under five-year child mortality rate between ST and rest of population. On an average, 51 percent of ST children are underweight and there are chronic energy deficiencies among tribal men and women. Among different socio-economic groups, the health status of the ST and SC children is well below than other social groups. The condition of tribal children can be easily gauged from the fact that 45 percent children are underweight, 44 percent are stunted and only 56 percent of children are immunized. These figures are far below than other communities like the SC, OBC and Others (Raykar et. al., 2015, p. 25).

There are constitutional provisions for development of Scheduled Tribes. Part – X of the Indian Constitution deals with the *Scheduled and tribal areas*. In it, Art. 244 cover fifth schedule and sixth schedule for the administration and control of tribal areas. Part – IX, Part – IXA and Part - XVI provide provision to make tribal politically forward by reserving seats for ST in Panchayat, Municipalities, House of the People and Legislative Assemblies of the states with some exceptions to autonomous districts. Art. 338A provides for the *National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST)*. The main duties of the Commission include investigation and monitoring of all matters relating to safeguards ST, to inquire complaints registered with respect to deprivation rights of tribal, to advice on planning process of socio-economic development of tribal, to evaluate the progress of such development and to present report and recommend President of India upon the working of such safeguards. Article 46 directs the states to promote and work for the education and economic development of vulnerable sections of the population particularly, the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

1.2 Problem Statement

Scheduled tribes are one of the disadvantage socio-economic groups in India. Substantial gap exists among tribal communities and the other communities with respect to poverty, education, health, livelihood opportunities and assets persist, particularly in rural areas. Tribal policy aimed for development of ST community has not been successful in reducing gaps even after many decades of implementation of such programmes. There is a need to revise the policy of integration for tribal development that formulated some decades ago. However, tribal communities inhabited in different regions of India are not homogenous and neither is their level of development. Development of tribal population in India varies across states. Tribal inhabited in the North-eastern region fall under the Sixth Schedule and have special Constitutional provisions for tribal development. Those in the peninsular India are under the Fifth Schedule and have provision under PESA. This special status

protects their land rights and provide for self-governance. The FRA 2006 and the land reform act protect and recognize the right of tribal in general.

The poverty rate among tribal communities is much more than other social groups. In 2011-12, 45.3 percent of tribal in rural areas and 24.1 percent in urban areas live below the poverty line compared to other social groups whereas the percentage of rest of population living below poverty line was 25.7 percent in rural and 13.7 percent in urban areas. Although the level of poverty has been reduced among tribal and other social groups between 1993-94 and 2011-12 the pace of progress among tribal is low and still lag behind. The states of Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha and West Bengal have poverty level more than 50 percent while poverty is more prevalent in rural areas. The state of West Bengal marked an increase in poverty level among scheduled tribes both in rural and urban areas. It has increased from 32.9 percent in 2009-10 to 50.1 percent in 2011-12 in rural areas. Similarly, it has increased from 20.6 percent in 2009-10 to 44.5 percent in 2011-12 in urban areas (Thorat, 2007, p. 63; Panagaria and More, 2013, p. 5).

Lack of access to assets such as land ownership is also the cause of poverty and retard development. The land is an important source of livelihood and development. Tribal possesses no or unproductive marginal lands, lacks irrigation and market linkages etc. They lack assets ownership. As land is the main source of rural livelihood, most of the tribal population is concentrated in rural areas and hold marginal land. Landlessness was highest in case of ST (9.41%) compared to other social (7.40%). The largest proportion of ST households is self-employed in cultivation i.e., 50.95 percent compared to other social groups (49.90%). This shows that the major occupation of tribals in India is agriculture. There is need to focus on the problem of land crisis among tribal communities (MoSPI, 2013, p. 15; MoTA, 2014-15, p. 26-27).

The educational attainment of tribal shows improvement but efforts could not be able to narrow down the gap between ST and rest of the population in the country. This gap becomes much wider after the primary level. High dropout and low enrolment found among the scheduled tribes compared to other

social groups due to the remoteness of areas, poor livelihood means, inadequate quality schools, language and cultural barriers, non-availability of teachers, the unwillingness of teachers due to remoteness and lack of vocational training. Apart from educational gap, there is prevalence of high infant mortality rate, maternal mortality rate among tribals, non-availability of safe drinking water, high incidence of malaria and major diseases like sickle cell anaemia etc. Due to inadequate infrastructure, lower immunization, malnutrition, loss of traditional food, inadequate coverage of pregnant mothers, unwillingness of doctors or medical staff in remote areas and difficult terrain etc. Hence, there is need to focus on strategy to increase the pace of development to bridge the gap between tribal and other population on all those parameters where tribal lag behind (MoTA, 2014-15).

The state of West Bengal constitutes 5.8 percent of the total tribal population. There are 40 notified individual tribes in the states. The sex ratio of ST is 999 that are greater than national average i.e., 990. In the rural and urban areas, the ratio was 1000 and 991 respectively. In 2011, the difference between literacy rate of general and tribal population is 18.4 percent. The male literacy rate of tribal is 68.2 percent and female are 47.7 percent. Tribal women literacy rate is quite lower as compared to male literacy rate. It is also surprising that significant literacy gaps exist between tribal women and non-tribal female population in West Bengal for the year 2011 that was 22.8 percent. Major tribes in the state are Santal, Oraon, Bhumij and Munda. Highest literacy rate found among Magh, Bhutia, Lepcha, Limbu, Tamang and Chakma. The lowest literacy rate found among tribal groups like Gorait, Parhaiya, Savar, Mal Pahariya, Sauria Paharia, Lodha and Asur whose literacy rate is even below 37 percent. Of the total 47 percent of tribal workers, 58 percent are main workers and 42 percent of them are marginal workers while 53 percent of the tribal population in the state is non-workers. In case of main workers, largest tribal population are engaged in agriculture (49%) and 15 percent are engaged as cultivators. 33 percent of them are engaged in other works while only 2 percent is engaged in household industry. In Paschim Medinipur, Jalpaiguri and Puruliya districts, there are highest

proportion of deprived tribal households (SECC, 2011; Census, 2011). It has been found that not only considerable gap exists in levels of socio-economic development between ST and other communities in the country, but development gap also exists between different tribal communities. More intensive study to critically evaluate the impact of development policies on tribal communities in India is urgently required. In this context, it will be highly relevant to study the tribal population who do not enjoy any safeguards under Sixth and Fifth Schedule of the Indian Constitution. Therefore, this study has identified the tribal population of Sub-Himalayan West Bengal region for case study.

1.3 Review of Literature

The review of literature has three identified thematic groups. The first thematic literature group is on global perspective of tribal development in which we examine the various alternative approaches to tribal development across the globe. In this section, we analyse to what extent the approaches contribute or fail to contribute tribal development in various countries. The second thematic group is on tribal development in India. In this literature we review the alternative school of approach for tribal development in India and outcomes of development policies for STs in India. The third thematic literature in this study is on tribal livelihood and its linkages with natural resources. It examines how livelihood and well-being of tribal community has been affected in the country when access to resources is curtailed.

1.3.1 Literature on Global Perspective of Tribal Development

Patrinos & Skoufias (2007) argued that cross-country experiences showed that policies of integration and assimilation that aimed lowering the gaps and inequality between indigenous and mainstream population have proved to be unsuccessful. Rather, new policies being prescribed for development of indigenous communities. These policies aimed to provide self-autonomy to indigenous peoples in the development process. The shift in development paradigm is mainly because of adoption of an international policy framework for indigenous development as mentioned in ILO Convention No. 169 (Patrinos & Skoufias, 2007, p. 6).

ILO Convention No. 107 which provides for the integrationist approach was widely rejected and protested by the indigenous peoples on the ground that this approach would be a threat in preserving their cultural identity. The adoption of ILO Convention No. 169 in 1989 proved to be more successful. This document focuses least on the integration of indigenous communities with rest of the population but rather it focuses on the development of indigenous peoples on their own way thereby respecting their tradition, customs and their way of life. Around 14 countries of Latin America have ratified ILO Convention No. 169. However, this convention was not ratified by Asian and African countries as these countries reject the criterion of self-identification as indigenous (Kingsbury, 1998, p. 416; Ormaza, 2012, p. 269-270; Feiring, 2013, p. 62).

Cornell & Kalt (2006) in their study have pointed out two different approaches to the economic development of American Indian reservation. First, is the 'standard approach' which is based on federal and tribal practices developed during the twentieth century. This approach has not proved to be successful in improving the tribal condition. One of the drawbacks of the approach is that people other than Indian community decide the development agenda. Although law allows tribal government to take control over the administration of federal program but the law limits tribal role in determining whether the adopted policies would be appropriate or not. In addition to the above drawback mentioned, the decision making in 'standard approach' is short-term and non-strategic. The other development approach is commonly known as the 'nation-building approach'. The second approach proved to be successful in the development of American Indian nations, but only a few nations are involved. The principal reason for its success was due to practical sovereignty which gave the tribal people the power of decision-making. Their study pointed out that the nation-building approach has favoured and fulfilled tribal objectives to a larger extent. However, challenges remain especially for those American nations who are still stuck in the 'standard approach'. The challenge is to bring those nations into the realm of 'nation-building approach' (Cornell & Kalt, 2006, p. 3-13).

Davis and Partridge (1999) also found in their study that the different governments in Latin America since the end of World War II could not bring significant improvement in the overall welfare of the indigenous population. However, a new vision emerged among the indigenous people in the past two decades that challenged the existing approach of government to tribal development. By seeking assistance from international agencies, indigenous organizations were formed in which they actively participate in local decision-making and development policies. One of such successful organization is Shuar Federation in the tropical forests of eastern Ecuador (Davis & Partridge, 1999, p.3).

Uprimny (2011) and Feiring (2013) asserted that vulnerable indigenous communities of many Latin American countries requires special constitutional provision that can protect them. This provision which provides special rights to indigenous peoples is more radical in Bolivian and Ecuadorian constitutions. However, constitutional provisions could not slow down poverty and inequality among these disadvantaged communities due to lack of effective implementation of these provision in practice (Uprimny, 2011, p. 1589-1591; Feiring, 2013).

The 'integrationist approach' was adopted in Latin America to improve the poor social and economic condition of the disadvantaged people but this policy has little positive impacts. While assimilating this section of the population to the one with western culture, the tradition, culture, and even the economy of the indigenous communities are considered inferior and hindrance in the way of the modern development process. The modern development model fails to understand indigenous communities' socio-economic and cultural connection with nature and ecology (Pirttijarvi, 1999, p. 12-13).

The New Economic Policy adopted in Bolivia in 1985 introduced new economic, educational and land reforms. The policy was recommended by the World Bank and the IMF based on Washington consensus. This policy had positive impacts on the socio-economic condition of the indigenous people but this impact did not remain for long-term. Indigenous people started facing problems due to the privatization of mining companies and traditional agriculture sector was affected due to the

promotion of export-oriented sectors. Employment increased in the informal sector with a decline in urban indigenous people working in formal sectors (Gigler, B., 2009, p. 23-27).

McNamara (1985) and Kimeu et. al (2016) studies showed that in Australia, colonization by the English Crown in the imperial era had deprived mostly the aborigines from their land either by the government action or by the private sectors. However, the first Aboriginal Land Trust Act that enacted in 1966. The purpose of law was to benefit aboriginal people. But it did not provide them legal right to claim their land. In Kenya, 66 percent land belonged to the community and 12 percent belonged to the public. Almost 65 percent community land remained unregistered and hence untitled. Government owned Trust lands and they were managed by municipal or local councils (McNamara, 1985, p. 463-473; Kimeu et. al, 2016, p. 14-18).

1.3.2 Literature on Tribal Development in India

India has large cultural diversity and the level of development across the regions is not uniform. Since from the beginning of the economic planning, the planners focus on to maximize country's GNP and greater investment on economy and to combat the social phenomenon like poverty, various programmes were initiated through rural development. A single strategy for the entire country may not be appropriate to adopt because not all regions have the same type of problem (Rao, 1979, p. 1307). Development of national economy was the top priority for Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru and at the same time, he was also responsible to suggest a suitable approach toward tribal development for which he thought to bring tribal out from isolation and to let them develop the way other mainstream population were progressing without undermining their culture (Rath, 2006, p.78). In India, the initiative for tribal development existed even before independence but the policy undertaken by the colonial ruler was rather 'isolationist'. Immediately after Independence, the need for tribal development was again discussed in the Constituent Assembly by the national leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Thakkar Bappa and Rajendra Prasad and hence provisions for tribal areas were enlisted in the Constitution of India. Verrier Elwin suggested strategies for tribal development and his first major

contribution was reflected in his book, 'The Philosophy of NEFA' published in 1957. Jawaharlal Nehru had also introduced five principles for tribal development. Nehru's tribal policy was so important that even the Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission 1961 had mentioned in its report the need of such policy for tribal development (Singh, 1978, p.1226; Singh, 1982, p. 1320-1321). Two different approaches were suggested for tribal development by Verrier Elwin and Thakkar Bapa. While the former suggested 'isolationist' approaches the latter argued in favour of an 'assimilationist' approach for the development of the tribal population. Elwin approach advocated minimal contact of the tribal community with the outside world. As against this the assimilationist approach as propounded by Thakkar Bappa aimed at assimilating the tribal people with the mainstream India (Singh, 1978, p. 1226). However, both the approaches were abandoned due to administrative reason and instead, Nehru suggested a new 'integrationist' approach for addressing tribal development. This new approach was more popularly known as '*Panchsheel*' or five principles for tribal development; which aimed at providing an enabling environment for the tribal people. In essence, the approach laid down the framework for self-governance of the tribal community while at the same time sharing the benefits of development and retaining the best elements of their tradition, cultural life and ethos. These principles were followed in Second Five-year plan. However, this approach failed because it could not create the required synergy at the grass-root level (Preet, 1994, p. 35; Priyadarshini, 2015, p. 36-37).

Aiyappan (1965) argued that the approach to tribal development is very slow to bring tribal upto the level of rest of the population and suggested that in order to make plan and programmes effective the government strategy through plan documents would be such as to focus on rural development. His study on tribes of Orissa reveals that the cultivators engaged in growing commercial crop lacks market strategy and also capital (Aiyappan, 1965, p. 940-950).

Bhowmick (1988) argued that government development strategies were unable to lower poverty gaps between tribal and non-tribals. Efforts are required to focus on tribal problems from ground level and

there is a need for region specific plan and development if their problems had to be addressed (Bhowmick, 1988, p. 1005-1007).

Tagade (2012) identified three factors have been identified for underdevelopment of tribal and their growing high incidence of poverty and malnutrition. First, development policy designed and adopted for economic development is not compatible with the tribal development policy, second, encroachment of non-tribal's in tribal territories for livelihood, and third, the violent political movement in tribal areas. Landlessness and land alienation has made tribal living condition even worst (Tagade, 2012, p. 2).

Gupta (1986) & Charsley (1997) argued that Integrated Tribal Development Programmes (ITDP) adopted in the fifth five-year plan could not solve tribal problems from grass root levels. The reason behind this is that it could not make structural arrangement for beneficiaries to interact with them directly, no provisions for tribals to participate in decision making and even deficiency in monitoring system. What ITDP was intent to do according to plan documents and proposals had really not worked out. In West Bengal, LAMPS had proved to be node through which tribal become involved with confidence and aware about the happening which ITDPs should have to but could not do. Therefore, what really needed is that ST must be encouraged for their greater involvement in decision making while correcting the loopholes (Gupta, 1986, p. 36-39; Charsley, 1997, p. 5).

Mallick (2014) study showed that tribal in Jamalpur block of Burdwan district are in poor condition. ST are found to suffer poverty, lack of basic minimum services and low productivity in agriculture. The development programme has not reached poor people but concentrated in the hands of elites (Mallick, 2014, p. 84).

1.3.3. Literature on Tribal Livelihood and Resource Linkages

According to Chambers and Conway, 'A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities for a means of living' (c.f. Scoones, 2009, p. 175). It is defined as 'adequate stocks and flows of food and cash to meet basic need'. The approach to

livelihood generation must to be sustainable and it must be secured by having assets like land ownership, access to resources and income-generating work and stability in employment. Economic growth generates wider choice to livelihood opportunities for individuals. There is need to improve human capabilities, equity and increase sustainability (Scoones, 2009., p. 175; Chambers & Conway, 1991, p. 5).

The land is a very important source and primary means of livelihood in the rural areas of developing countries. Therefore, access to land and property rights are important for the rural tribal households not only to support their subsistence livelihood but also had important implications on their social and economic condition (Deininger & Binswanger, 1999, p. 247; Bakshi, 2008, p. 2). In India, land holdings of tribal cultivators have declined i.e., the percentage of households that did not own any land has increased from 16 to 24 percent between 1987-1988 and 2010-12 that resulted in more households working as wage labourers (Karat & Rawal, 2014, p. 153). Almost 43 percent of ST agricultural labours are poor (of total 60 percent Head Count Ratio for all social groups and all household types) which increased to 52 percent in 1999-2000. Tribal women's work participation rate has also increased compared to other social groups. Further, the number of tribal educated youth have also increased and also migration. The poverty ratio declined among SC and ST. However, ST experienced small decline both in rural and urban areas. Therefore, greater effort requires for their speedy progress (Sundaram & Tendulkar, 2003, p. 28-29; Panagariya and More, 2013, p. 17). Tribal households, whether they live in forest land or non-forest land or may be in forest fringe, their access to land is important. In rural areas, land holdings are least among poor people (Mearns, 1999, p. 4).

Erni (2015) stud in Chittagong Hill Tract found that tribal in the hilly tract still practice shifting cultivation. Among the Ao Naga farmers of Sungratsu and Chuchuyimpang villages of Nagaland, transition have been notified in their livelihood activity, i.e., from shifting cultivation to more permanent land-use systems, however, their dependency on land remained the same (Erni, 2015, p. 43).

Biswas and Rao (2016) study of Gaddi tribe of Himachal Pradesh are considered to be a semi-nomadic, semi-agricultural and semi-pastoral tribe. Due to climatic change and conservation of forest areas, there had been a shortage of grazing land. The changing land relation has diversified their livelihood activities. From nomadic herders, agriculture had become their prime occupation. Some work as unskilled labourers in public work and forest department while less educated work as seasonal wage labour in construction, agriculture or community work (Biswas & Rao, 2016, p. 164-166).

Handique et. al., (2010) study on Nyishi tribe of Arunachal Pradesh found how they use bamboo for their household consumption and to generate income through the sale of bamboo products. They not only use bamboo for consumption but also preserve it for future consumption and use. Bamboo has high economic benefits to this tribe. Training on scientific method and techniques on bamboo crafts by this tribe can encourage national and international market (Handique et. al., 2010, p. 217-220).

Study by Das (1995) on tribal communities such as Monpas of Tawang district, the Sherdukpens of West Kameng districts, the Nishis residing near Apa Tani plateau, the Khamtis of Lohit district and the Singphos of Changland district of Arunachal Pradesh showed that these communities are engaged in two different types of agricultural cultivation namely jhum and settled cultivation. The study revealed that tribes of these study regions practiced terrace rice cultivation or wet rice cultivation. Settled cultivation started during colonial capitalism. The tribes of the state are engaged in different economic activities apart from agriculture. These activities include forestry, crafts and manufacture, weaving, cane and bamboo works, pottery, blacksmith work, metals and ivory works, wood carving and carpentry. All the tribal women were engaged in weaving under household industry. However, this industry decline due to less availability of raw materials and they weave only when raw materials were supplied by customers (Das, 1995, p. 22-38).

Banerjee and Banerji (2010) study revealed around 65 percent of ST populations in Nagaland depend on agriculture and practice shifting (jhum) and terrace cultivation. This form of land practice is

followed in the state since many generations. Naga possesses community land ownership. However, terrace cultivation are found only in the pockets of Kohima and Phek districts due to high cost. Jhum cultivation constitutes 90 percent of the cultivable area, terrace rice cultivation/ wet rice cultivation as 8 percent, horticulture/cash crops as 2 percent. Due to water shortage facilities, 57 percent of agriculture carried out under rain-fed irrigation. New technological innovation is limited in the state. Study further found that jhum cultivation shifted to plantation horticulture due to development projects initiatives (Banerjee & Banerji, 2010, p. 240-242).

Kunhaman (1985) study on hill tribes of Kerala such as the Malayarayans, the Muthuvans, the Kanikars and the Uralis revealed that these communities became settled agriculturists in three administrative units, Malabar, Cochin and Travancore by the end of 19th century. The land was commonly owned by the communities, i.e., the headman allocates an area to each family according to its needs and ability to cultivate. After the influx of immigrants in the regions, most of them became agriculture labourers. Interaction of tribal communities with the market forces has shifted them from coarse cereals cultivation to diversified agriculture with commercial crops (Kunhaman, 1985, p. 467-470).

Singh (2003) study identified and highlighted land alienation problem confronted by tribal in Dehradun, Udham Singh Nagar, Banda and Mirzapur districts of Uttar Pradesh. This had made them wage labourers or bondage labour. Conversion of land for development projects have made them marginalised. Marginal holders' sale their land and migrate to plains for other livelihood options. In the four districts, viz., Mahrajganj Balrampur, Bahraich and Shravasti, the most tribal population were engaged in the agriculture sector (51.40% of the total 400 sample households), 17.66 percent were engaged in animal husbandry, 11.58 percent work as a labour and few were engaged in the service sector (4.58). Of the total 600 sample, tribal households in Dehradun, Udham Singh Nagar, Banda and Mirzapur districts of Uttar Pradesh (a survey conducted by Purvanchal Manav Kalyan Sansthan, Mahrajganj), the marginal land holdings were higher in Mirzapur and Dehradun while Banda and

Udham Singh Nagar accounted the medium size holdings. The average size of land holdings was only 1.86 acre. Around 91.35 percent of the land was under agriculture, 3.57 percent under wasteland and 3.19 percent under orchard. 60 percent of the operational agricultural land was being irrigated. With regard to the use of agricultural inputs, only 16.33 percent of farmers use tractors for cultivation while others use bullocks driven plough. Markets are located nearby villages from where they purchase agriculture equipment or else agricultural department provided the inputs, cooperative supply two fifth of fertilizers. Not all the tribal households use the fertilizers due to unavailability of irrigation facilities, most of them use manure. Block level offices to some extent provide assistance for livestock rearing (Singh, 2003, p. 118-134).

1.4 Research Objectives

The proposed work seeks to analyse the socio-economic, health and education condition of the Scheduled Tribes and its linkages with their livelihood and income status. Income and employment are the base of the social and economic situation of each and every individual. With meagre income, an individual can only be able to survive, but cannot fully participate in activities of the society. Importantly, the study also seeks to analyse the alternative tribal development approaches and its achievement in developing the status of tribal well-being.

Following objectives are proposed for the study:

1. To examine the socio-economic condition of STs in India in general and that of tribal communities in Sub-Himalayan West Bengal in particular,
2. To examine the extent of inequality in resource ownership between STs and other communities,
3. To examine the gap in human development indicators between STs and other communities,
4. To examine the impact of economic development policies on tribal communities,
5. To study the linkages between land rights and tribal development,

6. To study the impact of rural development programmes on tribal livelihood,
7. To study the linkages between tribal livelihood, artisanal skill and handicrafts,
8. To study the extent of marginalisation of ST who do not enjoy Constitutional safeguards under the Fifth and Sixth Schedule.

1.5 Research Questions

The study proposes to study the following research questions.

1. Has monetization of the rural economy affected the tribal household's productivity?
2. Does low remuneration from artisanal and handicraft activities made younger generation of the tribal community unwilling to participate in these livelihood activities?
3. Will market integration of artisanal and handicraft activities ensure higher benefits for tribal communities?
4. Does low skill formation force tribal workers to take up less remunerative non-farm activities?
5. What are the short term (coping strategies) and long term (adaptive strategies) livelihood strategies adopted by tribal households?
6. Has mixed farming evolved in tribal communities because of the marginal character of the land they usually possess?
7. Does absence of constitutional safeguards like 5th and 6th Schedule adversely affect tribal development?
8. Does elitism in local institutions deprive tribal communities from development benefits?
9. Will a better synergy between tribal traditional health systems and modern healthcare systems ensure improvement in health of the tribal population?

10. What is the trend in human development indicators for tribal population across various regions in the country?

11. Has the gap in human development indicators between tribal and other category of population declined over the years?

12. What are the institutional bottlenecks that impede tribal development in India?

1.6. Research Hypothesis

The proposed study has formulated the following hypothesis and shall try to examine them.

1.6.1 Hypothesis Related to the Impact of Economic Development Policies on Tribal Livelihood.

Economic policies pursued under the New Economic Policy (1991) have resulted in total monetization of rural economy and has led to rapid increase in the overall price level of commodities. Coupled with this, there has been the growth of population and adverse climate change. As a result, there is a growing need for capital investment in the rural economy to address the livelihood challenges posed by these changes. Also, as a direct competition to tribal produced goods the Indian market has been flooded with relatively cheaper manufactured goods. The outcome of this has been a decline in artisanal and handicraft activities of the tribal communities. This economic transformation gives rise to certain research hypothesis:

1.6.1a. As a result of integration of the rural economy with the larger economy, the tribal household's productivity bears a direct relation with access to capital.

1.6.1b. The productivity of tribal households is less as compared with other communities due to low fertility and inadequate irrigation of their land.

1.6.1c. The decline in tribal artisanal and handicrafts activities has been the result of stiff competition faced from manufactured commodities.

1.6.1d. Low-value addition in artisanal and handicraft activities has made it less attractive as a livelihood option among the young tribal population.

1.6.1e. The non-farm sector provides only low paid work due to low skill formation of the tribal population.

1.6.2. Hypothesis Related to Inequity and Tribal Development Policies

Implementation of tribal development programmes has often been flawed due to institutional bottlenecks. Though many of these institutional failures are due to social and cultural factors; institutional bottlenecks also arise due to top-down development programme being forced on the tribal community. It has been reiterated in many international forums that development of indigenous communities must evolve from within rather than being forced upon them. Development must not be perceived as a threat to their way of life; rather development should be complimentary and strengthen their culture. A set of hypotheses thus arises in relation to tribal development and rural institutions.

1.6.2a. Low skill formation and limited non-farm livelihood opportunities have been the major obstacle in the diversification of tribal livelihood in the Sub-Himalayan region.

1.6.2b. The poverty of tribal communities in the Sub-Himalayan region and the marginal character of their land have culturally led to high dependence on livestock, artisanal and handicrafts.

1.6.2c. Dependence on livestock, artisanal and handicraft production for livelihood has led high dependence of tribal communities on regional resources stock.

1.6.2d. Denial of access to resources and in absence of property rights on resources, the livestock holding and artisanal & handicraft production of the tribal households has been declining.

1.6.3 Hypothesis Related to Marginalization and Tribal Development.

Even when there is statutory provision for participation of STs in development planning at local level, tribal communities have been continued to be deprived by the dominant social groups. The inability of ST to participate in the development process has led to marginalization of tribal communities in India. The process of marginalization has also been deepened due to land alienation. Any development at local level is reflected through increase in land price. The poor tribal household in

desperate need for cash disposes their land and relocates to remote places, thereby depriving themselves of the benefits of development. Land alienation has also been witnessed in the region through undocumented lease arrangements or through mortgage. Such arrangements can be for a season or long term like in case of small tea plantations. The process of marginalization of the tribal community in India is also visible in relatively slow reduction of poverty and continued gap in education and health indicators. This process of marginalization of the tribal communities gives rise to a set of research hypothesis.

1.6.3a. The failure of local institutions to ensure tribal development has been due to ‘elitist capture’ of development benefits.

1.6.3b. Land alienation of the tribal households has been the direct outcome of their inability to meet their increasing monetary needs.

1.6.3c. Marginalization of tribal household through land illegal land transfer and leases is a result of ‘Government failure’ to enforce property rights.

1.6.3d. Slow vertical progress of education among tribal population is a result of perceived higher benefit from labour market than expected returns from additional year(s) of schooling by tribal households.

1.6.3e. The STs demand for modern healthcare services has been low due to prohibitive monetary and imputed cost of labour time for health services.

1.7 Design of Study

1.7.1 Introduction to Study Area

The focus of the study will be the Sub-Himalayan region of Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar districts in West Bengal. The Scheduled Tribe population in this region has increased since 1961. The population has increased from 354741 in 1961 to 731704 in 2011 (DCHB, GoWB, 2011). The region consists of tribes who belong to Indo-Mongolian origin and of Indo-Dravidian origin who have settled here from

other regions of India. Of the total tribal population in the district, 41.67 percent of them are engaged in workforce. Of the total workforce, 76.05 percent of tribal population is engaged as other workers as their main occupation, while 12.96 percent are agricultural labourers and 10.32 percent of them are cultivators. The higher share of other workers is primarily due to tea workers being clubbed into other workers category. Only 0.65 percent is engaged in household industry work.

Agriculture, forestry and tea garden are the main economy of the region since the colonial period. Agriculture is the key activities in the Jalpaiguri district with limited availability of irrigation facilities. Rice is the main agricultural crop and other crops include wheat, jute, potato and chilli. The district is the second producer of tea in the state while horticulture crops consist of pineapple and jackfruit. It also produces Eri silk (10542 tons) and Muga (0.36 tons). It has 3 market yards and 57 sub-market yards. The major industries of the district are: tea garden, jute processing, saw milling, chemicals, Food Processing and Match manufacturing. Clay pottery, bamboo products and plastic products are operated through MSME units. The government of West Bengal has taken initiatives to develop tourism industry since region is blessed with rich biodiversity and pleasant climate (NSDC Report, 2013; MoSPI, 2013-14).

1.7.2 Methodology

The study will be based on both primary and secondary data.

- I. Secondary data will be used for analyzing the trend in ST population and development indicators. To study the distribution of assets for rural ST population, data on operational land, livestock holding, household amenities, etc will be analysed. The data sources identified include Population Census, Agriculture Census and NSSO. In addition, reports and publications of Government of India Department such as MoTA, MoPR, relevant reports and publications of Government of West Bengal are included for this study. Also reports and publications of international institutions like ILO, World Bank, India's Five-Year Plan report, reports and literatures that are relevant to the study is considered

- II. Primary data: Since the present study is also based on primary data, therefore, this study will be made by conducting the sample survey of tribal households in Alipurduar and Jalpaiguri districts.
- III. Methods: Descriptive statical method is used to construct graphs, pie-charts to analyse the data. Econometric model includes logistic regression, ordered logit and multivariate regression analysis to test the hypothesis for this study.

1.7.3 Sample Selection and Survey

The sample design involves multi-stage stratified random sampling. In the first stage, blocks are selected based on tribal demography and development indicators. In the second stage, villages were selected based on tribal population and their work profile. In the third stage, the two groups of tribal households are selected randomly from the list of tribal households in the village. We consider a five percent margin of error and hence 400 households were selected for the study.

Tribal households are categorised into two groups:

- (i) Survey of tribal households with ownership of agriculture land; and
- (ii) Survey of tribal households without agriculture land ownership.

Present study uses both quantitative and qualitative techniques. Qualitative techniques included discussion with tribal households with regard to their aspiration or attitude towards development. The quantitative data collected from the households are analysed using statistical techniques.

1.8 Chapters in the thesis

The present study has total eight chapter.

Chapter one *Introduction* provides the brief account of the problem of study, review of literature, research question, research hypothesis, objectives and design of study. It gives outline of the sample design for the conduct of micro-level study of selected villages of Alipurduar and Jalpaiguri district.

Chapter two on *Socio-Economic Background of Tribes in Sub-Himalayan West Bengal* will try to examine and analyse in detail about the socio-economic background of Scheduled Tribe of Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar district. Using the information on different time periods population census data, agricultural census data, Government report, empirical and theoretical literature, this chapter will provide trends in educational and occupational pattern, rural-urban population trends among ST communities in Study districts.

Chapter three on *Inequity in Land, Livelihood and Tribal Development in India* will examine the land issue of tribal and process of marginalisation among ST in India vis-à-vis sub-Himalayan eco-region of West Bengal using secondary data.

Chapter four on *Regional Human Development Trends for Tribal People in India* will discuss and analyse the trends in education among ST. The present study in this chapter will try to make comparison between State of West Bengal and States that fall under special constitutional provisions of fifth and sixth schedule. Other than education, study considers proxies indicators of income and health to study trends. Thereafter, the study will describe and highlight trends among ST within proposed study districts of West Bengal. The study in this chapter will make use of secondary sources of data.

Chapter five on *Tribal Development in Forest & Riverine Ecoregion of West Bengal* will examine the socio-economic condition of ST communities of proposed study villages of Paschim and Madhya Satali located in forest and riverine eco-region of Alipurduar district using primary survey data as well as secondary data. The study will construct microeconomic modelling such as binary logistic regression model to support the hypothesis proposed for the study. The study will use M.S. Excel and STATA software version 17 to analyse and examine the field survey data.

Similar study will be undertaken in chapter six on *Tribal Development in Terai & Alluvial Ecoregion of West Bengal* to examine and analyse the socio-economic condition of ST communities of Salbari and Mathachulka villages situated in Terai-Teesta Alluvial eco-region of Jalpaiguri district. The

microeconometric model constructed in chapter 5 will be referred to make inferences from the study for ST communities residing in eco-regions of Jalpaiguri district. Therefore, binary logistic regression model and other descriptive statistics will be used for the study along with M.S. Excel and STATA software version 17 to analyse and examine the field survey data.

Chapter seven on *Marginalisation, Deprivation and Vulnerability among tribal communities in the Sub-Himalayan West Bengal* will examine as whole the issue of marginalisation and deprivation among the 400 surveyed ST communities of sub-Himalayan West Bengal. The chapter will provide Scheduled Tribe Vulnerability Index (STVI) constructed in line with the Sustainable Livelihood Framework (SLF) using the field survey data. In this chapter, an attempt will be made to examine and identify the factors influencing the level of vulnerability among ST communities in the study region.

Finally, chapter eight is on *Review, Findings and Recommendations* will provide the summary and review of the findings from the study. This chapter will provide summary review for each chapter. Based on the understanding and knowledge gained from the present research work and suggestion received from the ST communities belonging to older adult and young adult who participated in Focussed Group Discussion (FGD) conducted in each study village, an effort will be made to extend some recommendation. Such recommendations will be made to improve effectiveness of various rural development and tribal development programmes at grass-root level launched for tribal development.

1.9 Conclusion

To sum up, this chapter provides the overview of the proposed thesis on inequity and marginalisation of ST in India in general and that of sub-Himalayan regions in particular. In the beginning of this chapter, detailed statement of problem has been discussed covering the various development aspects of ST vis-à-vis others social groups. In the process of development, the ST communities has lack behind. From the review of literature, the study found that government both at the Centre and the State have made tremendous efforts. Despite such efforts, these communities are backward in general

due to poor health condition, asset holdings, literate but education up to primary or upper level. Very less proportion are found to have higher education and skilled. From review of literature, the study also identifies ST in sub-Himalayan regions to be lacking behind in both social and economic front. Therefore, based on the literature reviewed and research gap found in terms of estimating the level of deprivation and vulnerability among the ST communities, this chapter provides list of research questions and objectives. On the basis of research question, the hypothesis was prepared in this chapter. Hence, this chapter provides roadmap to carry out the proposed thesis along with the methods and sampling techniques used for the study.

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