

Chapter 7.2 7.3

Social change and Contemporary tribal societies.

(A) Social changes During Pre-Colonial Period:-

- ↳ During Pre-Colonial period tribals have mostly existed in Isolation from mainstream societies.
- ↳ According to Suresh Singh three major trends were visible during that period:
 - (i) Colonisation and establishment of settlement
 - (ii) Bhils, Mina, Kols and Gonds were recognised as dominant tribal societies by Mughals.
 - (iii) Rise of State either out of tribal matrix as like Gonds or as a result of imposition of tribal system of authority of Rajputs. For this State establishment, new agriculture technology emerged in these areas.
- ↳ At many places outsider communities were encouraged to settle in tribal area [Kunbi, Karmi]
- ↳ This new state acted as agents of Sanskritisation in tribal area.
- ↳ New trade route emerged in tribal area, this also promoted urbanism.
- ↳ Because of all these changes, the isolated tribal societies undergone changes in socio-economic sphere through

B) Social Changes : Colonial / British rule :-

↳ F.G. Bailey, Surjit Singh and N.K. Bose along with others identified forces behind changes among tribal societies.

- ① Extension of state authority to tribal regions.
- ② Breakdown of isolation of tribes
- ③ Breakdown of communal mode of production.
- ④ Appearance of minor and major tribal uprisings.
- ⑤ Christianity and its missionary activities.
- ⑥ Forest laws introduced by British.
- ⑦ Introduction of outsider, commercialisation of Agriculture in tribal area

↳ According to S.R. Sharma (1999) :-

- (i) Relative isolation of tribals come to end.
- (ii) old forms of social control mechanism and agencies of social change were revised.
- (iii) Land and agriculture commercialisation
Hence economy based on self-sufficiency, agriculture and forest produce based economy weakened and destroyed.
- (iv) customary Laws of tribal societies were replaced by new form of centralised British rules.
- (v) changes in tribal markets, entry of currency.

(vi) Entry of Dikku (Aliens/outsiders) in tribal area, e.g. Moneylenders, Shopkeepers, etc.

(vii) Change in Religious practices : British period Christianity become force of social change through missionary activities. In Central India Christianity established missionaries.

↳ Value system has changed, improved educational status, change in Religious practices like witchcraft, Shamanism, changes occurred in Youth Dormitories.

(viii) Tribal uprising : Reaction to changes occurs in many places. e.g. British policies of land revenue, forest policies led to uprising e.g. Kol movement (1830s), Bhil uprising, Tana Bhagat movement, Santhal revolt, etc.

Overall changes during colonial period :

① Economy :- monetisation of economy, tribal market structure changed, land come under private ownership, Consumerism, commercialisation spread in tribal area.

↳ Peasantisation and depeasantisation occurs.

② Polity :- Many customary laws relevance has been decreased and newer British rules come in picture, this led to alienation

feeling among tribal societies.

- ③ Social change :- Ethnic interaction with outsider led to ethnic conflicts [demographic change occurred in tribal dominated area]
- ④ Religion : Traditional ways of belief and practice were changed due to Christianity, Hinduism. Many evidences of conversion can be found.
- ⑤ Family structure : Increase trends towards nuclear family structure.
- ⑥ Kinship : more importance to non-kinship relation due to commercialisation, individualism among tribal societies.
- ⑦ Youth dormitories : Undergone drastic change and erosion of many basic functions occurred.

⑧ Post Colonial Social Changes

Number of anthropologist like Majumdar, V. Elwin, S.C. Dube, Roy Burman and L.P. Vidyarthi studied various tribes and studied social changes occurred in tribal societies.

- ① Majumdar classified tribal societies based on degree of social change:

(a) Primitive tribes outside Hindu influence:
e.g. Andaman & Nicobar Island tribes

(b) Primitive tribes which adopted Hindu customs
 e.g. Santhal, Oraon, Munda, etc.

(c) Primitive tribes which are Hinduised but maintain social distance from clan, caste.
 e.g. Gonds, Bhumijas, Bhils, etc.

② Vidyaarthi classified tribes into 5 types:

(a) Tribal Communities e.g. Andamanese, etc.

(b) Semi-tribal communities e.g. Koli (Mahadev), Baiga, etc.

(c) Acculturated tribes : migrated to urban area
 e.g. Santhal, Oraon, Munda.

(d) Rural tribes who living in rural area
 and depends on Agriculture
 e.g. Munda, Ho, Gonds, etc.

(e) Totally assimilated tribes : Bhumij, Khasa, RajGonds, etc.

③ N.K. Bose work, 'Hindu mode of tribal Absorption' shows social change and relation of tribal with Hinduism.

⇒ Social change in those come in contact with Hindu

(i) Give up widow remarriage practice

(ii) Give up beef eating

(iii) Start adopting caste like structure in society

(iv) Decrease in egalitarianism

(v) Tribe - caste Continuum.

forces of change in post Independence

- ① Constitutional Provisions :- 5th, 6th Schedule, Art-14-30.
- ② 73rd Constitutional amendment, PESA 1996.
- ③ Modern democratic institutions, Sanskritisation
- ④ Developmental projects, Industrialisation, Urbanization.
- ⑤ Welfare programmes, LPG movement post 1990s.

Social Changes :-

- ④ Family :-
 - Increase trends toward nuclear family structure
 - Decrease role of kinship, elders.
 - Women role have increased.
- ⑤ Marriage :-
 - Now considered as contract than sacred affair.
 - High divorce rate than before.
- ⑥ Education and Health status improved.
- ⑦ Increase pace of Sanskritisation, westernization.
- ⑧ Economy :
 - Advancement in Agriculture, new market for tribal products
 - Tribal Economy Barter → monetized
 - Penetration of currency to remote areas and interlink with outsiders.
 - Issues of poverty, unemployment, Indebtedness, land alienation still persist.

- Consumerism, commercialisation value system in tribal area due to external influence.
- Development Induced displacement.

⑤ Political :- Increase representation of tribals in state and central government.

- ↳ Conflict between traditional authority and formal political authority observed at many places.
- ↳ Emergence of new leadership
- ↳ Improvement in women leadership.
- ↳ failure of government to utilise traditional leadership for welfare programme success.

⑥ Religion :-

- Secular value have increased
- Participation of tribal in practices like magic, witch hunting decreases.
- Importance of traditional belief and God is still persist
e.g. Niyamgiri Hill - Niyamraja

⑦ Other changes :-

- (i) Decrease Co-operation and increase the competition attitude, Rational value improved
- (ii) Issue of erosion of traditional knowledge, culture, language.
- (iii) Changes in food habits, dressing, music, arts, settlement pattern, commercialisation of tribal arts.

Case Studies

- ① Gadgil and Guha :- Hunting gathering community of chenchu and jenu kuruba, is losing their livelihood and hence doing other works for the livelihood e.g. Agric. labourer, Criminal activities, etc along with that Jenu Kuruba helping forest dept. in conservation of elephants.
- ② Artisan study by Gadgil and Guha :-
 - ↳ Iron Smith technique totally died out and Aganis and Asur tribe had to take poor ~~irrigation~~ agriculture or wage earning
 - ↳ Dhokda Crafts among Dhurva of MP, Jh, this skill is dying due to lack of government scheme to train and supply tool kits
- ③ shifting cultivation :- Ban of shifting cultivation, government is providing alternative livelihood source.
- ④ Khond :- British suppressed their practice of human sacrifice and offered them education
- ⑤ Practice of Mizo: Burried child (live) along with dead mother discontinue after missionary start accepting children [Animesh Roy study].
- ⑥ Division in villages :- Khasi village Christian converts and non converts.
- ⑦ other cases studies from chapter 8:1 Impact of Religion.

Hence, all these social changes occurred in tribal societies, some are positives and some shows negative impact.

[Reference: Nadeem Hashnain].

Government Approach toward tribes :-

- Integration
 - Tribal panchayat
 - Bottom up approach
 - Colonial mindset
 - Top down
 - Insensitive towards tribals
- } In theory only.
- } In practice

What should be approach

- Inclusive development approach
- Effective Rehabilitation and Resettlement
- V. Kanya Committee recommendations
- National Commission for S.T. recommendations

Social change Impact of modern Democratic Institutions

Modern democratic institutions has impacted tribal life in all sphere. Social, Economic as well as political structure and functions has shown impact of democratic institutions.

These changes led to empowerment of tribals in most of the cases. However, these institutions has challenge traditional value system, Authority and traditional way of administration of tribal societies.

Modern democratic Institutions :-

- ① Constitution
- ② Judiciary and Laws
- ③ Legislative Institute - parliament, State Assembly,
- ④ Panchayat raj institute.
- ⑤ Election
- ⑥ Financial institutes (Banks, co-operatives)
- ⑦ Educational institutions.

① Constitution

↳ Constitution provides safeguards to S.T. under various provisions :- Art. :- 15, 16, 17, 46, 19.

Art. :- 244, 242, 275, 338, ...etc.
5th & 6th Schedule

Impacts :-

- (a) Help to improve literacy and share in public services (govt. jobs)
- (b) Reservation at central and state level legislative bodies (MP & MLA) has led to improvement in representation in political field.
- (c) Fifth and Sixth schedule provision:- Autonomy and hence avenue to promote tribal interest
- (d) tribal area protection due to restricted entry to outsiders [Art-19].
- (e) Decrease in discrimination related to untouchability [Art-17].

② Judiciary and Laws :-

- ↳ Universalisation of law / judiciary ; Rule of law.
- ↳ Uniform civil and criminal laws.
- ↳ Integrated judiciary : National legal system will supersede traditional system [with some exemption].
- ↳ Abolish cruel practices of punishment like head hunting, ordeal, witchcraft, Human sacrifice, social boycott ,etc.
- ↳ Sometime this led to conflict between traditional laws practiced by tribal and modern legal system.

③ Legislative Institutions :-

↳ Parliament and State legislation has legal authority to make laws related to tribal administration and laws related to 5th & 6th schedule.

↳ Example :-

(i) Bonded Labour [Abolition] Act 1976.

(ii) SC and ST Prevention of Atrocities Act 1989.

(iii) Forest Right Act 2006.] Power to control over

(iv) PESA, 1996] land, forest resources.

④ Financial Institutions

↳ Financial institutions like Nationalised Banks, RRBs, SHG groups, Co-operative societies.

e.g. NSTFDC, LAMPS, MFI, PFC, ... etc.

↳ This led to better credit availability and reduces role of moneylenders in loan distribution.

↳ However, lack of awareness and poor documentation processes of banks, makes difficulties in availing benefits from these financial institutions.

↳ These institutions has democratised the financial sector for tribals with professional practices in financial services in tribal area.

⑤ National Commission for S.T. → Art. 338

↳ Grievances of Tribals can be addressed, it has power of civil court. However, lack effective functioning.

⑥ [Educational Institution] :-

- ↳ These are the instrument of empowerment in true sense.
- ↳ This will lead to increase skill and employability of tribals.
- ↳ New value system, secular education, scientific temper in tribal communities.
- ↳ Erosion of language observed due to new educational institution which lacks schooling and education in tribal languages.
e.g. Mundarin → Hindi or Bengali edu. school.
- ↳ These institutions have free and compulsory education system available till the age of 14 years.
- ↳ Scholarship and reservation in institution led to improvement in literacy and awareness.

⑦ [Panchayat Raj Institutions] [e.g. PESA 1996].

- ↳ Traditional and village authorities suffered setback with emergence of Panchayat Raj system.
- ↳ In some part there is compromise between traditional and statutory Panchayat have been observed.
- ↳ Traditional Authorities (hereditary based) has now only symbolic meaning in local administration in many cases.

- ↳ Panchayatraj provides democratic decentralisation, all the adult got their voice in local decision making through adult franchise and GramSabha.
- ↳ Women Reservation led to improvement of women representation in political sphere.
- ↳ Rational, merit based authority elected by tribals rather than traditional hereditary authority (Tribal council).
- ↳ Still in many places people's political behaviour lies in kin feeling, village & group feeling.
- ↳ Panchayatiraj provided legal protection to tribals for their autonomy and management of local resources e.g. PESA → Niyamgiri case
- ↳ Election at local level :
 - ⦿ Now all member of village got voting rights
 - ⦿ Power structure got distributed among Gramsabha.
 - ⦿ New set of western educated leaders have changed socio-economic condition in rural / tribal area.
 - ⦿ Women got more representation.

Case Studies

- ① 'People of India Study' discussed about Gonds and found that - there is no clash between traditional & statutory authorities. Also now a day most traditional panchayat restrict their activities due to statutory panchayat.

② Prasad's study in Rural Bihar:

- ↳ Newly emerged leadership is not much different from traditional.
- ↳ Quality of representative leadership is weak.
- ↳ New leaders focus more on self aggrandizement.
- ↳ Issue of training, illiteracy and awareness among new representative.
- ↳ Prasad's study also highlighted similarities between emerging tribal leadership and mainstream leaders [Neta culture].
- ↳ Low community participation; low women's role.
- ↳ outsiders hijack local bodies, as outsiders are more educated, aware about politics.

③ 29th report of Commission of SC, ST :-

- ↳ Traditional self government institution have no role in administration and development process and they do not get benefit from the new ideas.
- ↳ Modern statutory institutions given to tribals in the name of self government could not become their own. These institutes largely ineffective and routinised in the functioning. In fact they have become cause of social discord due to politics of votes and emergence of unhealthy leadership.

↳ Presence of both institutions - modern and traditional led to confusion among common tribals, where to go when there is a matter of social concern.

(4) B.D. Sharma (29th report) :-

↳ This report highlighted model of 'Raisabha' of Gonds in Adilabad district [Telengana]: Raisabha is a confluence of old and new: where village community comes together as a group to deal with outsiders including government department. [Reference: Tribal India by Nadeem Hashmi]

(5) National Comm. for S.T. and Bhuria Committee report have advocated a model of 'blend' between traditional and statutory Panchayat. Similar to that of Raisabha.

(6) P. Shilu Ao :- He observed that new institutes does not conform their customs and customary traditions. Hence it is looked upon as Alien and incongruous to tribals.

(7) Tooroo study : Rajasthan village : Rajpura and Raghupura Villages, study observed that some clan has hijack the panchayat without participation of others. [Dominant clans control the Authorities].

Overall changes due to democratic Institution:

- (i) Democratic institutions divide the village because of voting and election. [village previously were egalitarian].
- (ii) Confusion in tribal where to go with grievances to traditional or statutory authority. Many time tribals prefer traditional over statutory.
- (iii) with modern democratic institutions, tribal become more aware about their rights, control over local resources and the bottom up approach in planning.
- (iv) New leadership : secular, weberian hierarchy merit based system [No hereditary]. These institute become nurturing labs for national leadership in longrun.
- (v) outsiders mostly benefited due to capture of local bodies as they are more educated and having money and awareness.
- (vi) These democratic instⁿ gave democratic values like equality, secular outlook, justice, fraternityetc.
- (vii) Position of women in new institute has changed - increase participation in decision making.
- (viii) Local bodies got legal power to realise their rights e.g. PESA Act - Gram Sabha power - Niyamgiri.
- (ix) Many North East Indian states took quick advantages of these instⁿ because of better educational level of people in NE India.

Impact of Development Programmes and welfare measures on tribals and weaker section

Programmes :-

- Educational
- Health related
- Employment related
- Economic welfare
- Poverty alleviation programme
- special for PVTG.
- TSP, Research institute, etc.

Impacts :- Regionwise, tribe wise distribution.

- Infrastructure changes
- Social impact - Health, education
- Economic, employment related impact
- Political impact, awareness, Rights.
- Religious activity impact
- Impact on women
- Impact on standard of living, poverty.
- Impact on value system, etc.

Impact depends on :-

- Education level of tribals
- Communication infrastructure
- Awareness about scheme / rights / programme
- Administrative structure - for implementation
- Financial inclusion level of tribal area
- Attitude of tribals .

(A) Educational Programmes :-

- Ashram schools, Ekalavya Model school.
- Reservation in educational institution.
- Vocational training in tribal areas
- Scholarship : matric, post matric, higheredu.
- National overseas scholarship for s.t.
- Right to education, Sarva Siksha Abhiyan
- Kasturba Gandhi Balika vidyalaya.
- Tribal university, mp.

Impacts :-

- ↳ Improved literacy rate
 - 2001 Census - 47 %
 - 2011 Census - 59 %
- ↳ Improved employability due to better education and skill development \Rightarrow \uparrow social capital.
- ↳ Increase Health indicators, habit of saving, entrepreneurship activities in tribals.
- ↳ Increase representation in govt. services
- ↳ North eastern state perform better than other part of country.
- ↳ Education empowers the tribals to enter in professions like doctor, engineers, etc.
- ↳ Secular education decreases practices like superstition, witchcraft.. It also helps to increase acceptance of modern medicine.

↳ However some states shows low level of literacy and education : Rajasthan, Odisha ... specially for women.

Reasons are :-

- Content of education, language
- Teacher problem.
- Attitude towards formal education (tribals)

(A) Economic welfare

- National Scheduled Tribe Fin. Develpt. Corporation.
- Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA)
- Co-operative Societies [PAC, LAMPS]
- Microfinance institutes for tribals.
- TRIFED
- Tribal subplan
- Vanbandhu Kalyan Yojana, Vandhan scheme.
- District mineral foundation.
- Special central assistance and grants.

Impacts :-

- ↳ Commercialisation of forest produce through TRIFED e.g. Kandha tribe → chone to Tirupati Balaji
- ↳ Commercialisation of tribal Art e.g. Wardi painting
- ↳ Decrease dependence on moneylender for loan/credit supply due to Co-operatives e.g. PAC
- ↳ Microfinance - enterprises developed in tribal area due to better access to finance.
- ↳ Vandhan scheme :- SHG → saving habit, employment and improve women financial condition.
- ↳ Problem :- Awareness, implementation, Access, ...etc

(C) Employment Related programme :-

- Reservation in public services (Jobs)
- Skill development programme
- Standup India, SC/ST Hub.
- Vandhan scheme
- TRIFED, TRYSEM, SHG promotion.
- wage employment schemes e.g. MGNREGA
- Adivasi Mahila Sashaktikaran yojana.

Impact :-

- ↳ Increase availability of employment
- ↳ Skill development - employability increase
e.g. Gujarat govt. training to tribal community for driving skill.
- ↳ Entrepreneurship development.

(D) Developmental programme for PVTGs :-

- ↳ Conservation cum development Programme.
- ↳ 100% central assistance scheme to NGO.

(E) Health related programmes :-

- ↳ Universal Immunization, Telemedicine
- ↳ National nutrition mission (POSHAN Abhiyan)
- ↳ AYUSH promotion, mobile clinics,...etc.

(F) Poverty Alleviation Programmes :-

- ↳ Housing for All
- ↳ MGNREGA scheme
- ↳ PDS / food security
- ↳ Self employment scheme
- ↳ Vanbandhy Kalyan yojana.

Guiding Institute for tribal welfare programme

- (i) National Commission for Scheduled Tribes.
- (ii) Tribal advisory Council in 5th scheduled area.
- (iii) Ministry of Tribal affairs
- (iv) Tribal Research Institution

Impact of these welfare programme:

- ↳ Impact varies according to region, tribe wise.
It mainly depends on tribal educational level, communication, awareness and administrative structure in state or district.
- ↳ Various studies assess impact of programmes:
 - Ⓐ People of India Project : 1994
 - ↳ Studied 635 tribal communities and gives finding:
 - ① Political :- Rise in leadership among tribal at village level, regional level and national level.
 - ② Educational :- Increase literacy rate & decrease dropout rate
 - Census 2001 : 47%
 - Census 2011 : 59%
 - ③ Health :- 53% shows favourable attitude and acceptance of modern medical Healthcare
 - ↳ Decrease in IMR, MMR indicators
 - ↳ Improved nutritional condition.

④ Economic :- Improvement in awareness about various self employment scheme and hence increase in participation.

⑤ Other finding :- Electronic media coverage has increased over the period. New Professions: Doctor, teacher, engineer found among tribals.

⑥ Study by Chaudhary :-

In "An Introduction to tribal transformation in India" work, he gave opinion that there is transformation of tribals from marginalised to acute awareness of their rights.

- ↳ Development of tribals has not observed upto the mark as per expectation due to defect in policy formulation and due to implementation issues
- ↳ There is lack of 'felt need approach' while designing and implementing programmes. Hence in many cases policies shows insensitivity towards tribal culture.
- ↳ Tribals are pushed into market economy without proper resources to survive in competition.
- ↳ Elite class emerged among tribals which cornered developmental benefits [e.g. Reservation Benefits].

① Gadgil and Guha study :-

- ↳ They studied hunting-gathering chenchu and jenukurubas of Andhra pradesh.
- ↳ Jenukuruba with vast traditional knowledge of all forest, helping forest department in rearing elephants and collection of forest produce. Their earning is very less out of these forest produce while forest department getting huge revenue.
- ↳ This led to impact of these policies toward their livelihood and they are finding other livelihood opportunities.
- ↳ Similarly Chenchus are hunter-gatherers, but due to low income from forest produce, some have taken crime as livelihood option, as developmental programmes are not reaching them.

Reasons for poor Development of tribals despite various programmes .

- (i) Lack of participation of tribals in developmental activities:- policy design - policy implementation.
- (ii) Policies are designed as 'one size fit all' hence lack of customized approach acc to condition.
- (iii) Not use of 'felt need approach' in planning and implementation of welfare programme.
- (iv) Lack of political will , also bureaucratic apathy in implementation process.

- (v) Gram Sabha : Limited power under PESA 1996 in developmental activities.
- (vi) Socio-cultural reason - acceptance of developmental programmes among tribals.
- (vii) Displacement due to developmental projects
- (viii) lack of education and awareness
- (ix) Low level of involvement of NGO, civil societies.
- (x) Insufficient funding, high level of corruption.
- (xi) Programmes and benefits are cornered by few elite class among tribals.

Solution : what is needed.

- ④ Developmental programme designing and implementation need to consider tribal culture, acceptance of programme and changes the programme according to need (self need approach)
- ⑤ Improvement of participation : locals, womens, NGO, civil societies.
- ⑥ Co-operation & co-ordination among various developmental agencies for success of programme.
- ⑦ Awareness and mass media
- ⑧ Use of traditional method for success of project
e.g. • Gotra Bandhu (Kerala) for education
• Raisabha of Gond for local administration
- ⑨ Capacity building of local bodies, functionaries, use of ICT & Research finding.
- ⑩ Following V. Xaxa Committee Report Recommendations.

