

Chapter 9.2

Role of Anthropology in Tribal and Rural Development

A) Role of Anthropology in Tribal Development

Anthropology is a study of Mankind in totality. There is an increase in importance for understanding the cultural factors in field of every developmental activities. Sociocultural dimensions confront every step of the developmental Projects and programmes.

Anthropology can be used in understanding tribal population and problem they are facing, so that Problem can be analyse and appropriate solution can be provided.

What is tribal development :-

↳ Programmes and policies designed specifically to improve tribal condition [such as poverty, health, employment issue, education....etc] These policies are meant for tribal population hence tribal specific modification are needed for their success. [Inclusive development, Sustainable development, SDG, HDI....etc]

Reason for failure of Tribal Development Project:-

- (i) Habits, Aesthetic sense and tastes are different
 - e.g. • Improved variety of wheat may not taste good for tribal people and they may not accept it.
 - Toilet use habits.
- (ii) Established practices : Established pits to dump waste but practice of cow dung deposit on wall by women in rural part of country.
- (iii) Cultural factors :- Sacred complex, trees, Practices can be act as obstacle to projects
- (iv) Traditional practices and beliefs : Vaccination against small pox not successful as they are considered as visit of Goddesses.

To understand these trends and making govt. programme/ project successful, anthropological interventions are very important.

Importance of Anthropology in Tribal Development:-

Tribal societies are different from majority or mainstream groups. Among tribals also various groups have different socio-cultural and economic background. Being isolated from mainstream societies, there is understanding about tribal society.

- ↳ Anthropologist have been studying these societies from long time and hence they can help to understand these societies and can make govt. programme more successful.
- ↳ Anthropologist, observes, study and analyse, understand tribal societies in their own habitat, hence help to understand field view (Insiders view)
- ↳ Anthropology involves face to face study, field-work data, participation and comparative methods to study tribal societies. Anthropology also consider cultural relativism hence understand local perspective which is important for any tribal developmental programme success.
- ↳ George Foster puts forward 3 most important merits of anthropology :-
 (i) Anthrop. as a point of view
 (ii) As a storehouse or treasure of factual information
 (iii) It's distinct research methodology.

The Holistic approach, consideration of cultural aspect and relativism and a strong humanitarian tradition put this field on different stage/level.

Difference between Administrator & Anthropologist

Development means growth and change involves both material and nonmaterial human development.

Here Anthropologist knows both material and non-material aspects of tribal life. Many socio-cultural factors are integral part of dynamic growth which can be better understood by anthropologist. e.g. Nature-Man-spirit complex in area of displacement of tribals.

- ↳ Development depends on traditional values, historic experience, hence there is need to understand value system of tribals. Anthropologist as participatory observer been beside in tribal area & can understand tribal communities, whereas administrator hardly spend this much time on such aspects.
- ↳ Acceptance from tribal societies is more toward anthropologist compared to administrator as they consideres state machinaries are enemy to them in many cases.
- ↳ Anthropologist can act as alternative approach if regular administration are not showing success.
- ↳ Anthropologist can become bridge between expert and local communities.
- ↳ Anthropologist can help in activities like Env. Impact Assessment, social audit, survey, etc.

Anthropologist suggestions for tribal development

- (i) Microlocalised the project to minimise development related displacement.
- (ii) Involves NGO, civil society, tribals while formulating & implementing programme.
- (iii) Use of Holistic view, felt need approach towards tribal issues
- (iv) Consider cultural relativism, sympathy towards tribal problems.
- (v) They advocated use of Applied and Action Anthropology.
- (vi) Advocated alternative developmental strategies e.g. joint forest management.
- (vii) Use of anthropological studies, data for developmental activities.
- (viii) Training of administrator working in tribal areas needed for better implementation of project.

Historical perspective of use of Anthro. in Tribal Area

↳ Importance of Anthro. knowledge first realised as early as 1807, when Court of Director made formal decision that such knowledge would be of great use in future administration of country. This was followed by ethnographic studies by Francis Buchanan.

- ↳ British administrators used anthropological knowledge to understand various ethnic groups for example Risley, Dalton studied ethnic groups.
- ↳ Problem oriented work first done by J.H. Hutton in 1931 and advocated, "Self Governing Tribal area with free power of self determination". Later S.C. Dubey gives similar view on Bihar tribal communities.
- ↳ L.P. Vidyarthi was an advisor to government and he classified tribes based on economic activities for better implementation of developmental project.
- ↳ Vanner Elwin : monumental monograph on Baigas of Central province
 - It was first work which was vocal, bold & explicit
 - Lamented Baigas were victims of overhasty and unregulated process of development
 - Suggested national park in which Baigas and like will be accommodated (Isolationist)
 - He was an advisor to govt. for North East front.
- ↳ After Independence govt. realised social workers, administrators and anthropologist should work with harmony for tribal development.

- ↳ Govt. established Tribal Research Institutes for detail study of tribes and their problem.
(here anthropologist can help to study tribals)
- ↳ Various commissions and committees formed to understand developmental issues of tribals for example Shebar Commission, V. Xaxa Committee,...etc
- ↳ According to Raymond Firth there are 4 Role of Anthropologist :-
 - (i) Client oriented Research (Professional nature) where anthropologist work for specific project professional basis.
 - (ii) Mediation Role : Between tribals & outsider/govt.
 - (iii) Formation of public opinion : on issues related to Small Scale Community through journalism, Research paper, ...etc.
 - (iv) Participatory role (Action oriented) in developmental process e.g: In Implementing FRA 2006, vaccination, ...etc.
- ↳ According to Sachidanand Anthropologist not only offers Blueprint, But offers a map on which certain pitfalls are marked and he can offers elementary principle of social analysis which helps in policy formulation and implementation.

- ↳ S.C. Dube former advisor to govt. for community development programme advocated Tribal Subplan which is still practiced for tribal development.
- ↳ Applied Anthropology :- use of anthropological knowledge and practices in policy formulation and implementation. for example use of V-Xaxa Committee report information in health and educational programme for tribals, sociocultural factors (NMS complex) in displacement & rehabilitation.
- ↳ Action Anthropology :- participation of anthropologist directly in developmental activities. for example S.C. Roy as a member of Bihar govt. upheld cause of tribal people. S.C. Dube advocated Tribal Subplan, Haimendorf work in land record modernisation and Health education of Tribals in Andhra Pradesh (Telengana).
- ↳ Anthropology provides Holism approach hence can help in Rehabilitation and Resettlement Programme.

Problems of use of Anthro in tribal development

- ① There is Lack of leadership studies, Absence of institutionalisation of research
- ② Foreign anthropological tools need customised for Indian Studies.

- ③ There is absence of meaningful social criticism
- ④ Lack of enthusiasm among anthropologist, lack of proper govt. support and scarcity of young talent in field of anthropology.
- ⑤ The methods used by anthropologist are too rigid.
- ⑥ They sometime neglect govt. policy principle (wisdom) behind tribal programme.

Hence, there is less success in use of anthropology in tribal development.

(What Should be Needed)

- ↳ Need relevant and committed anthropological studies and anthropologist.
- ↳ Need to concentrate on weaker section problems (tribals)
- ↳ They should go for macrogeneralisation of problems.
- ↳ Customised use of foreign anthro tools, consider local need, modern social change while studying tribal societies.
- ↳ Committed anthropologist having analytical and explanatory capacity and nation building attitude are needed for better tribal studies & Tribal development.

Overall Role of Anthro. in Tribal Development : phases

① Policy Formulation phase :-

- study the tribal society, identify needs and problems
- understand peoples reaction to govt. Programmes [Anticipatory approach]
- Suggest recommendation to govt. based on studies of various tribal aspects.

② Policy Implementation phase :-

- look for social and cultural barriers and how to resolve.
- use of action anthropology.

③ Monitoring phase :-

- This will help to improvement and modification in next phase of developmental programme.

④ Evaluation Phase :-

- This phase will provide analysis about success of programme and gives input for future developmental work.

In this way anthropology can help in tribal development.

(B) Role of Anthropology in Rural Development:-

According to 2011 census around 68% of Indians are living in rural area. These areas are majority depends on agriculture and unorganised wage labour activities. To improve the condition of rural people through various developmental programmes Anthro. plays key role at every step of programme.

Rural Development is a comprehensive process undertaken by govt. for purpose improving the economic and social conditions of people living in rural part of country.

Essential Aspects of Rural Development

- ↳ Most important aspect is agricultural development in rural area.
- ↳ Development must provides changes in socio-economic institutions to maximise benefit to population.
- ↳ These programmes should be politically independent.
- ↳ These programmes should be co-operative oriented for better success (Implementation).
- ↳ There is need of active participation of rural population at each stage in these developmental activities.

Developmental problems in Rural Area :

- ↳ Rural area is suffering from backwardness of education, Health, sanitation sectors. They lack basic infrastructure like electricity, water, road, ...etc.
- ↳ Rural population is still facing problems like Caste related violence, women treated as secondary citizen.
- ↳ There is issue of acceptance of developmental Project in rural area (e.g. Biogas plant, Toilets)
- ↳ Felt need approach is lacking in various developmental programmes.

Hence, for such dynamic societal problems we need dynamic approach, anthropology can help to solve many of these issues.

Anthropology use :-

① Anthropology will take into account of:

- Social organisations, their structure
- Social Stratification in village
- Human Relationships in rural area
- Cultural and value system
- Consequences of action.

- Beliefs and habits of rural population.
 - Consider cultural sensitive issues
 - Production, distribution and overall economy of rural area
 - Considers leadership style in particular village or rural area.
- ↳ Anthropology help in development without disturbing cultural ethos and identities.
- ↳ As all these factors will decide the acceptance and success of any developmental activities, anthropology will study and analyse these section and can provide acceptable solution to issues arises from these areas.
- ↳ Anthropology can gives idea about priority in rural area by studying the cultural and economic aspect.
- ↳ Anthropologist can anticipate consequences of developmental programme based on the cultural studies of rural societies.

Area of work

Anthropology can used in various areas in rural development for example :-

(a) Health :- vaccination, sanitation drive, etc.

- (b) Education :- language (medium of edn), curriculum, adult education, ...etc.
- (c) Employment :- studying customs and practices
Anthro. can provide opportunities in new sectors.
- (d) Agriculture :- Acceptance of Hybrid variety
- (e) Infrastructure :- Road construction, electricity acceptance, ...etc.
- (f) work under MNREGA, Swachha Bharat, mid-day-meal scheme also needs Anthro. help.

Precautions to be taken by Anthropologist :-

- ↳ Anthropologist should not be too rigid from the angle of his discipline.
- ↳ They should follow interdisciplinary approach while dealing with rural development issues.
- ↳ On the basis of micro studies, they should go for macrogeneralisation of issue or concept
- ↳ Need to use felt need approach towards rural development.

Village Studies for Rural Development :-

- ↳ Village studies gives social realities of rural India.
- ↳ After independence various govt. scheme agencies

and NGO like Ford foundation were sponsoring village studies for understanding rural India so that developmental plan can be designed.

↳ Village studies understand impact of New Scheme on rural population, this can give feedback to govt. for modification or expansion of the new scheme.

↳ Planning Commission gave attention to social problems which hampers development:

- Caste System
- Child marriage
- Dowry
- Female infanticide

→ Example of Village Studies :-

- ① S.C. Dube studied Shamsherpur (near Hyderabad) here he observed changing village structure, impact of govt. programme on rural population.
- ② M.N. Srinivas studied social mobility through Sanskritisation in Coorg village and political and social structure of village (Dominant caste) in Rampura village.
- ③ Ghansham Shah studied political association and Khap panchayat structure in North India.
- ④ Anthropologist can help in developmental changes without disturbing cultural ethos and identity of community.

↳ Anthropology uses Applied and action Anthropology in rural development.

Examples of Anthro-use in Rural Development Issues:

- (1) Established social practices help in formulating policies in rural area e.g. Daughter-in-law is customarily not expected to leave house frequently until she attains comparatively responsible status within family (i.e. After 2-3 child birth). This will help to design women related policies as their participation is important for success of scheme e.g. SHG related programme.
- (2) Sacredness of some places / practices :- for example avoidance of vaccination or immunization for small pox as many considered it as visit of Goddesses, No Toilet in house as house also has temple inside (Karnataka case).
- (3) changes occurs due to modern democratic institution and its impact on social stratification can have impact on implementation of developmental project at rural area. e.g. Mid day meal cooked by Dalit women have been rejected in many villages despite democratic rules / provisions.
- (4) New wheat variety of better productivity, but it does not taste good for locals, hence less acceptance observed in MP villages.

- ⑤ Providing sewing machine to rural population without giving training and marketing opportunities can not help to improve livelihood/employment.
- ⑥ Providing cattle for milk supply to lactose intolerant rural population will fails to improve nutritional status.
- ⑦ Less acceptance of contraceptive methods use for family planning in rural area.

Anthropological use :-

- ↳ Anthro. can make programme more acceptable to rural population by analysing sociocultural needs.
- ↳ Anthropologist become bridge between administration (govt) and local rural population. Social problem like Caste related violence can be better understood by Anthro. studies.
- ↳ Anthro. helps at each stage of developmental programme from policy formulation, implementation to review of programme.
- ↳ Anthro. can train administrator for better policy implementation (sociocultural angle, cultural sensitive issue training, Human relation training).
- ↳ They can help in rehabilitation and resettlement programme in rural part of country by providing various need of population at new place (cultural, basic services needs.) .

- ↳ In Agriculture , Anthro. Can help to change the Cropping pattern , Can increase acceptance of less water intensive crops by persuading villagers
- ↳ By studying jajmani system they (Anthropologist) can understand reason for decline of it and future prospect for various stakeholders in jajmani system.

Tribal and rural development approaches like Community development, Area development approach, Gandhian approach, IRDP, Drought prone area programme, Command area, all have to consider Anthropological perspective for its success.