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AFFIRMATIVE ACTION OF GOVERNMENT AND STATUS OF STs IN TELANGANA – A STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Affirmative action in India has a very long history and it is embedded in the values of the Indian constitution India is a country that has been characterized by very strong inequalities. A very rigid caste system stayed in place for several centuries and was only abolished officially in 1949. Even though it was abolished, most of the discrimination and the division among the castes continued. Only during the last centuries, following economic growth and modernization, Indians have begun to change their habits and to accept a more open system of stratification. Nonetheless, a lot of injustices are still frequent and in general members of the former castes have a comparative disadvantage. Equality of opportunity is hardly achieved and social position and success in life is mostly determined by ascription. The Indian government tried to overcome this problem by setting reservation quotas for the members of the former lower castes. In this way access to higher education institutions and to government jobs has been facilitated. Historically they were denied the right to property, business (except some occupations considered as impure and polluting), education, and all civil, cultural and religious rights, except manual labour and service to castes above them. Untouchables also suffer from residential segregation and social isolation The aim of this paper is to analyze and evaluate the rationale of affirmative action policies in Higher Education. Results will show that the absolute effectiveness of this policy is debatable but that in general the condition of former lower castes has benefited from the policy.

KEYWORDS: *Affirmative action, Caste, Equality, Economic, Growth*

INTRODUCTION

Affirmative action in India has a very long history and it is embedded in the values of the Indian constitution. Over the past decades the Ministry of Education has been responsible for the implementation of the affirmative action policies. In the course of the years the policies have been restructured and designed to meet different goals and to overcome several inefficiencies. However, limited data have been analyzed by policymakers in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the policies. If on the one hand, a part of the researchers suggest that the policies are not completely efficient but are still necessary on the other hand a growing portion of the population is protesting against reservation policies. For instance, they claim that reservation policies are not effective as they do not bring more equity and they have also negative effects on the efficiency of the education system. Historically they were denied the right to property, business (except some occupations considered as impure and polluting), education, and all civil, cultural and religious rights, except manual labour and service to castes above them. Untouchables also suffer from residential segregation and social isolation (Thorat 2005).

Affirmative action policies in India are operative in three main spheres, namely appointment and promotion in government services, admission to public education institutions, and seats in the legislature. In government services, there are reservations for SCs and STs in proportion to their share of population, in the civil service, public companies, statutory bodies, and voluntary agencies, although not in defense or the judiciary. In education, the government reserves places for SC and ST students in all government-run educational institutions. In political representation, constituencies are

reserved for SCs and STs in Central and State legislatures in proportion to their population share. In each case there are complementary provisions designed to increase the ability of SCs and STs to take advantage of the opportunities offered.

Another source of exclusion is linked with ethnic identity, from which groups like the *Adivasis* (meaning indigenous) – referred to officially as Scheduled Tribes (STs) – suffer. This group has suffered from isolation, exclusion, neglect and under- development due to their geographical and cultural isolation. In their case, exclusion can take several forms, including the denial of right to resources around which they live, and displacement induced by economic development.

Over time there has been a considerable increase in the share of SCs and STs in government employment and educational institutions. Reservations in the legislature have also provided a space for SCs and STs in the executive and in the decision-making process. The formal reservation policy in the government sector, and the general developmental and empowerment measures in the private sector, have also contributed to an improvement in the human development of SCs and STs. However, during the course of the implementation of India’s reservation policy some problems have become apparent. First, the success of the policy has been uneven across sectors and departments. Second, the policy is limited to the government sector, while more than 90 percent of SC and ST workers are employed in the private sector. Finally, despite the improvement in human development among SCs and STs, disparities in attainment with non-SCs and non-STs persist even to this day. This indicates that addressing social exclusion is often a far more difficult challenge than anti-poverty policy.

Table 1 Welfare indicators in India by caste and ethnic group

	SC	ST	Non-SC/ST
Poverty, rural (%)	36	46	21
Poverty, urban (%)	38	35	21
Child Mortality (per 1,000 births)	39	46	22
Assets per household ('000 rupees)	49	53	135
Percentage of wage labour, rural	61	49	25
Literacy, rural (%)	51	45	63
Literacy, urban (%)	68	69	82

Sources: National Sample Survey Organization, Delhi; International Population Research Institute, Mumbai; Commission for Scheduled Caste and Tribes, Delhi; Thorat (2005).

The Indian government’s approach towards these groups has been shaped by two key provisions in the country’s constitution, adopted in 1950. These are the principle of ‘non-discrimination and equal opportunity’, and the empowerment of the State to take steps to ensure non-discrimination and equal opportunity in practice. The approach has involved three main elements, namely:

- legal and other safeguards against discrimination;
- pro-active measures in the state and state-supported sector, in the form of the reservation policy;
- informal affirmative action in agriculture and private industry, as part of general developmental and empowerment measures.

India's current affirmative action policy, otherwise known as the 'reservation policy', is operative in three main spheres, namely appointment and promotion in government services, admissions to public educational institutions, and seats in Central, State and local legislatures.

GOVERNMENT SERVICES

The most important aspect of the reservation policy is that relating to government services. Article 16 (4) of the constitution empowers the State to make "any provision for the reservation in appointments, or posts in favor of any backward class of citizens", and "provision for reservation in matters of promotion to any class or classes of posts, in the services under the State in favor of the SCs and STs."

In pursuing this provision, the Government made reservation for SCs and STs in proportion to their share of population. There are also reservations in the promotion of employed persons. The government services included are the Government civil service, public sector undertakings, statutory and semi-Government bodies, and voluntary agencies which are under the control of the government or receiving grant-in-aid. At the central level, some services are however excluded from the reservation policy; these include, most prominently, defense and the judiciary.

Reservation is accompanied by other provisions designed to increase the ability of SCs and STs to compete for government jobs. These include the relaxation of minimum age for entry into the service, relaxation in the minimum standard of suitability (subject to a required minimum qualification), the provision of pre-examination training, separate interviews for SCs and STs, and representation of people with SC or ST backgrounds on selection committees.

INDIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM, SOCIAL MOBILITY

During the past decades social mobility in India was also enabled by a more equal access to education. A report from the World Bank (2007) clearly shows that access and enrollment in elementary school has increased enormously in the past years, even though some barriers remain in the poorest regions of the country. Nonetheless, universal primary education it is still far from being achievement and the socio-economic conditions of lower castes together with awareness of the importance of education must be increased. In fact, enrollment rates for lower castes are affected by the family welfare and by the reluctance to take children out of work and put them in school. Other physical and psychological issues inhibit school enrollment. Discrimination against lower caste is still present in school, resulting in segregation in the educational system and higher dropout rates (Jeffrey).

Desdai and Kulkarni (2008) found out that some improvements have occurred in the middle-school and secondary school. However, these improvements are minimal compared to the ones experienced in primary school. For the lowest castes and the untouchables the enrolment rate has not improved and in some regions it has even decreased. Scholars argue that the reasons for this failure are similar to the ones in primary education. Furthermore, improvements in higher education are not very promising. Despite the reservation policies only a small of the lower castes enrolls in higher education. The gross enrolment ratio for the overall population is 19.4%, compared to a global average of 29%. However, the government expects to reach 32% by 2022. According to the RUSA report, the main goals for higher education are access, equity, quality and excellence, relevance and value based education. In order to increase equity the government aims to arrest and reverse the trend of group inequalities in access to quality higher education. In 2008 gross attendance ratio was 11,6 for scheduled castes, 7,7 for scheduled tribes, 14,7 for other backward classes and 28 for other groups. Most of the policies related to education and equity are implemented through affirmative action and in the particular case of India through reservation policies.

In contemporary India affirmative action in higher education has been an important matter of debate. During the last decade many Indians have protested against reservation policies. They argue that reservation policies have favored regressive discrimination against members of the higher castes. There is a belief that these policies have a detrimental effect for the economic development of the country (Grewal, 2006). In fact, many positions reserved are taken by candidates that are generally less prepared and that get the position only because of their caste status.

On the other hand, many developments in regard to the mechanisms and the implementation of affirmative action in higher education have occurred in the last decades. In terms of legal justifications, reservation policies are backed by various articles in the Indian constitution. Article 15 focuses on the rejection of discrimination calling for special provision for the socially and educationally backward classes (Louis, 2003). Article 16 deals directly with the reservation policies and claims that to ensure equality of opportunity the state must step in directly reserving posts and appointments for any backward class. Finally article 46 claims that the state shall promote educational and economic interests of weaker sections of the population, particularly scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, as well as protecting them from social injustice and exploitation. In order to understand reservation policies in higher education it is essential to clarify who are the target groups and what is reserved for

them.

In order to understand reservation policies in higher education it is essential to clarify who are the target groups and what is reserved from them. 15% of the seats are reserved for Scheduled Castes which represent the lowest rank in the Indian caste system and make up for 16.6% of the population (Chauhan, 2008). 7.5 % of the seats are reserved for Scheduled Tribes which represent the tribal population and make up for 8.6% of the population. Yet, in 2007 the Supreme Court provided 27% of the seat to Other Backward Classes which represent a vast group of socially and educationally disadvantaged groups (but excludes the so called creamy layer of the OBC) and make up for 41% of the population. In total 49,5% of the seats are reserved for 66,2% of the population..

RECONSTRUCTION OF THE POLICY

During the past years political and academic circles have been debating on the effectiveness and the flaws of affirmative action. Most of the misunderstandings have been around the rationale of affirmative action policies and the expected outcomes. In order to shed lights on this debate a realist evaluation of the policies can be very useful. Realist evaluation is a type of theory-driven method that has been widely used to evaluate social policies. All the policies are the result of human imagination and consist of hypothesis about social progress. Thus, the aim of this approach is to evaluate and test the theories behind these hypotheses. The effectiveness of a policy is not only based on the outcomes but it is also related to the socio- economic context in which the policy takes place. Reconstructing the assumed context, the assumed mechanisms and the expected outcomes can clarify the position of the policy makers and can provide new interpretations and solutions to the challenges of the policy. In order to reconstruct the theory of affirmative action policy in India we first look at how the policy is supposed to work with regard to what input is supposed to lead to what output, outcome and impact. These factors are based on the policy information given in the 12th Five-Year plan of the government of India and from the policy information given in the RUSA holistic scheme of development for higher education (Planning Commission, 2013; Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2013). However, this policy documents only specify input and expected outcomes. For this reason all the assumed mechanisms and contexts had to be reconstructed following the most logical way of reasoning.

INPUTS, OUTPUTS, OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS

Inputs: The first step to implement affirmative action policies is to look at the inputs that are required and available for the success of the project. Even though assessing what are the tangible and intangible resources required might seem an

obvious step it is actually very important. In fact, successful projects require certain resources to be available at the right place and at the right time. In our case the resources available for the policy consists in two major groups: intangible resources consisting of policy tools and tangible resources consisting of money and staff. The most relevant policy tool consists on reserving seats for the target groups to access higher education. Furthermore, secondary resources are the incentives made available for preparatory programs consisting of remedial or bridge courses for the target groups that will facilitate their entry. Yet, incentives are also given for the creation of special programs, such as psychological counsellors and career service offices, to support the target groups during the studies. Policy incentives to bridge gaps in learning levels at the early stage of education are made available to favor equity in access to higher education. Finally, incentives and data are given for the creation of a commission that will develop a multidimensional scheme of inequalities that will improve the allocation of resources and quotas among target group members. On the other hand, financial resources are made available to increase financial aid, scholarships, tuition waivers and loans for target groups. Yet, money and staff are also made available for the creation of hostels for target groups and for the institution of "Cells" in various universities to manage, help and support target groups with lectures, psychologists and other resources. Finally, money and staff are made available for the creation of new higher education institutions in low GER (Gross enrollment ratio) areas where most of the target groups live. It is important to underlie that tangible (money, staff) and intangible resources (policy tools) are strongly related and their effectiveness is interdependent.

Outputs: Outputs consist in the products produced by the inputs. In the specific case, the most important output is the high number of target groups enrolling in higher education. Financial support offices and facilitated financial support schemes widely available to the target groups are also the product of the inputs. Other important output consists on higher number of cells and hostels available at different campuses, new higher education institutions, new established career service offices, support programs, an holistic and multidimensional scheme of inequality and finally more access to elementary, middle and high schools.

Outcomes: The outputs are expected to bring certain outcomes, which is in this case means short a medium term benefits. The most important short-term outcome that is expected is certainly more target group members graduating from higher education institutes. This outcome is strongly related to the increased equity in access to higher education and to the limitation of drop- outs and failure rates resulting from the financial,

psychological and physical support programs established by the government and used by the target groups. In particular, target group students will receive feedback and advises for their academic and career development. They will increase their knowledge and preparation for their academic career from the preparatory and support programs established by the cells. Furthermore, they will gain security by meeting with psychological counsellors. Their studies will be facilitated by the financial offices that will provide them with easy solutions to finance their studies and to find accommodation in affordable hostels. The new established higher institutions in rural areas will facilitate enrollment and continuation of studies. On the other hand, medium term benefits will also result from the given outputs. For instance, the target group participating in higher education will learn skills and knowledge, increasing their human capital, fundamental for the job market. At the same time, the target group will acquire social and cultural capital also fundamental for the job market. More enrollment of target group will lead to diversity in higher education institutions. In turn, more dialogue and interaction among groups with different opinions will occur. Finally, class consciousness and pride will increase among these target groups. In general terms, target group members will develop better curriculum, becoming more appealing for the job market and finally being able to compete for better job positions. It is important to point out that all the outcomes are caused by the outputs but they are also strongly correlated with each other.

Impacts: The outcomes of the policy of affirmative action represent many of the short and medium term benefits. In turn, these benefits contribute to other long-term societal benefits, that we defined here as impacts. One of the most important long-term benefits of affirmative action will consist on better jobs and careers for the targeted population. Better jobs will contribute to upward social mobility, poverty reduction and to budget savings in terms of social assistance programs to the deprived. More equity will result from a better socio-economic condition of the target group: a more balanced social stratification and a growing middle-class will follow. These aspects will also improve social cohesion and social order as well as improving the general economic condition of the country. On the other hand, the diversity and the exchange of ideas achieved in classrooms will have positive influences on social inclusiveness, openness and understanding among the various castes. Yet, this will also contribute to better learning environments in which more points of view are exchanged and progress is achieved through diversity. Finally, the new improved societal position of the target group will contribute to more political engagement and will also contribute to more respect and less discrimination and stigmatization.

TRIBES IN TELANGANA

Telangana state is very rich in the variety of cultures that represent all stages of human progress. We have the Chenchus, as primitive as those who lived in Stone Age and at the same time such as Gonds who are in no way inferior to their neighbours. Andhs and Bhils are backward and yet assimilated enough to be hardly distinguished. From the Gond settled cultivators to the Koyas and Konda Reddis who are still found inclined to indulge in shifting cultivation, we see the Chenchus who would not care to produce anything and prefer to live on the roots, tubers and other forest produce. There are such of them who in spite of being primitive have lost their dialects and those who are almost getting de-tribalized and yet maintain their own dialects. This is an example of the Chechus and the Gonds.

Starting from the Gonds and Naikpods and their dependent communities of Pardhans, Thotis and Kolams, the dwellers of the highland of Adilabad, we can survey the tribals southwards looking through Karimnagar, Warangal and Khammam districts where Koyas and Konda Reddis are concentrated. We can go further down south and climb up the Nallamala Plateaux of Mannanur and Farahabad of Mahaboobnagar district to see the Chenchus. For Andhs and Bhils, we have to look in the opposite direction, viz., North-West in to the district of Adilabad.

Only the following 9 were declared as Scheduled Tribes in erstwhile Hyderabad state under the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950 (Published in the Gazette of India, New Delhi, dated September 6, 1950) with the assent of the President of India.

1. Andh
2. Bhil
3. Chenchu or Chenchwar.
4. Gond (including Naikpod and Raj Gond).
5. Hill Reddis or Konda Reddis.
6. Kolam (including Mannarvarlu).
7. Koya (including Bhine Koya and Rai Koya).
8. Pardhan.
9. Thoti.

In exercise of the powers conferred by Sub-Paragraph (1) of Paragraph 6 of the Fifth Schedule to the Constitution of India, the President was pleased to make the Scheduled Areas (Part 'B' States) Order, 1950, (Published in the Gazette of India, New Delhi, dated December 7, 1950) declaring several villages in Mahaboobnagar (Achampet Taluq), Adilabad, Warangal and Khammam as Scheduled Areas within the erstwhile State of Hyderabad.

The term "Scheduled Tribes" first appeared in the Constitution of India. Article 366 (25) defines Scheduled Tribes as "such tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 to be Scheduled Tribes for the purposes of this Constitution". Article 342 prescribes the procedure to be followed in the matter of specification of Scheduled Tribes.

Empowered by Clause (1) of Article 342,

the President may, with respect to any State or Union Territory, and where it is a State, after consultation with the Governor thereof, notify tribes or tribal communities or parts of these as Scheduled Tribes. This confers on the tribe or part of it a Constitutional status invoking the safeguards provided for in the Constitution, to these communities in their respective States/UTs. Clause (2) of the Article empowers the Parliament to pass a law to include in or exclude from the list of Scheduled Tribes, any tribe or tribal community or parts of these. Thus, the first specification of Scheduled Tribes in relation to a particular State/ Union Territory is by a notified order of the President, after consultation with the State Governments concerned. These orders can be modified subsequently only through an Act of Parliament. The above article also provides for listing of Scheduled Tribes State/Union Territory wise and not on an all India basis.

The criteria followed for specification of a community as a Scheduled Tribe are. a. Indications of primitive traits, b. Distinctive Culture, c. Geographical isolation, d. Shyness of contact with the community at large, and e. Backwardness. This criteria is not spelt out in the Constitution but has

become well established. It takes into account the definitions in the 1931 Census, the reports of the first Backward Classes Commission (Kalelkar), 1955, the Advisory Committee on Revision of SC/ST lists (Lokur Committee), 1965 and the Joint Committee of Parliament on the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment) Bill, 1967 (Chanda Committee), 1969.

In exercise of the powers conferred by Clause (1) of Article 342 of the Constitution of India, the President, after Consultation with the State Governments concerned, had promulgated so far 9 Orders specifying the Scheduled Tribes in relation to the States and Union Territories. Out of these, eight are in operation at present in their original or amended form. One Order, namely the constitution (Goa, Daman & Diu) Scheduled Tribes order 1968 has become defunct on account of the reorganization of Goa, Daman & Diu in 1987. Under the Goa, Daman & Diu Reorganization Act in 1987 (18 of 1987) the list of scheduled Tribes of Goa has been transferred to part XIX of the Schedule to the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950 and that of Daman & Diu, to part II of the Scheduled to the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) (Union Territories) Order, 1951.

The list of number of Scheduled Area is as follows.

District wise No. of Mandals and Villages existing and proposed in the ITDA Areas of Telangana

Sl. No.	District	Existing Scheduled areas		Proposed Additions		Total	
		No. of Mandals	No. of Villages	No. of Mandals	No. of Villages	No. of Mandals	No. of Villages
1	Khammam	31	891	2	3	33	894
2	Warangal	11	178	7	76	18	254
3	Adilabad	32	412	27	164	59	576
4	Mahaboobnagar	3	23	2	4	5	27
Total		57	1504	38	247	115	1751

Telangana is the only south Indian state with tribal population of 9.34 percent out of its total population as per 2011 Census. The presence of tribal communities is more in and around the river valleys and forests of Telangana. As such their socio-cultural conditions can be understood better by identifying their regions as under.

1. Gond – Kolam Region
2. Koya – Konda Reddi Region
3. Chenchu Region
4. Plain Areas

The Gond – Kolam Region falls in the hills and forest region of Adilabad district north of Godavari river. The main tribes inhabiting the region are: Gonds and Naikpods and their dependent communities Pardhans and Thotis. Kolams, Andhs and Bhils also live side by side to the above communities. The Koya – Konda Reddi Region runs down Adilabad district further south

east side along the river Godavari through the districts of Karimnagar, Warangal and Khammam giving shelter to the Koyas and Konda Reddis. The Chenchu Region is the forested belt of Nallamala Hills north of Krishna river in the districts of Mahaboobnagar and Nalgonda. The Chenchus also live in and around the Vikarabad forest region of Rangareddy district. Communities such as Lambada (Banjara / Sugali), Yerukala and Yanadi living in the plain areas have also been being treated as tribes from 1976 onwards. In the year 2003 the communities of Nakkala and Dhulia were also treated as Scheduled Tribes. Further the new Government of Telangana has announced that it would consider whether the communities such as Boya Valmikis and Mathura Lambadas can be included in the list of Scheduled Tribes.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Masavi, M.I had observed that it is found that there is high incidence of poverty in tribal areas.

For tribals life in only a battle for survival. It is binding of the civilized city dwellers to bring life the lives of mere existence of these tribal brethren. To improve their standard of living there is an urgent need to provide them more opportunities of earning.

Rangacharyulu, S.V has found that the APL households enjoy better housing status than the BPL households in respect of each of the 16 major states suggesting that economic status is a factor to determine the housing status. It is further observed that

1. states of Haryana, Punjab and Kerala occupy the three positions on the housing status as far as BPL households are concerned. Similar trends are also witnessed in respect of both APL and overall group households. Falling on the end of the spectrum are the states of Orissa, West Bengal Assam and Bihar.
2. In the relative sense, the housing status of APL households, of the states of Orissa, Bihar and West Bengal is no better than that of their counterparts in the BPL category of the developed states of Haryana, Kerala, Punjab etc. Hence in addition to extending help to the weaker sections alone for bringing about improvement in the housing status, the Government housing policy must have a bias towards the APL households as well in these states.
3. The expenditure elasticity's of housing index are found to be high in respect of the states of Orissa, West Bengal and Bihar implying that incomes have a direct bearing on the housing status. As such, it is suggested that the Government should concentrate more on improving the incomes of the households, especially of weaker sections through effective implementation of wage employment programmes and this effort should be coupled with simultaneous implementation of housing programmes for weaker sections in these states.

Hanumantharayappa and Grover Deepak have noted that main distinguishing characteristics the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes are their rurality, illiteracy, economic backwardness (lower income, under incidence of indebtedness, fewer etc) and social retardation (low disabilities, etc). The same prevalent among general population also but are more prominent in the of scheduled groups. These groups, the tribes, constitute the among the weaker sections. Another facet of poverty among weaker sections is the ownership of fewer assets such as agricultural land. In general, the areas where the tribals live and work areas secluded and backward, Also the tribal areas

happen to be poorly integrated with the rest of the economy. Even though the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes are concentrated among small cultivators and agricultural laborers, it is naive to equate them the other weaker sections in rural India. They finally concluded that there is a need for careful analysis of data on weaker sections (particularly on scheduled castes and scheduled tribes) even though such data are scarce and are partially helpful for the purpose or planning. Greater caution is required in drawing policy inferences on employment and employment aspects on these sparse data. More detailed inquiries are necessary for different caste and tribe groups at the national, state local levels.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To identify the determinants of the backwardness of the scheduled tribes in Telangana.
2. To analyze the living conditions of tribals in the study area.
3. To evaluate the performance and Status of tribal as an integral part of their development strategy.
4. To identify the expectations of the tribal entrepreneurs.

METHODOLOGY

Both primary and secondary data are collected for this study. Primary data have been collected by administering a structured questionnaire (Schedule) and the responses were recorded. The secondary sources of data included the annual reports and the related reports of ITDA, Warangal district etc.

SAMPLE DESIGN

Towards the end of the objectives and hypotheses, 200 tribals are selected from Mahabubabad division. The sample units are selected mostly by adhering to the principles of stratified random sampling.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The present study covers only the living standards and social status of tribes in tribal areas of Telangana State. It does not cover the effects of non economic factors of tribal development.

CONCLUSION

In spite of various constitutional provisions and policies for the tribals, it is a hard reality that the tribal women still are lagging behind in many respects and they have to face many challenges. The study emphasized the need for tribal development in India. Their low level of economic activities, social backwardness, low level of literacy, poor health conditions makes it vital for a systematic process of tribal development. They work very hard and contribute significantly towards the economic condition of the family, but they are still in poverty mostly because no proper efforts are oriented towards them. During the plan periods, various programmes are taken up for the

development of the Scheduled Tribe population and a lot of betterment has been already done, but still, a lot more requires to be done. The families need to have a sufficient income to enable them to cross the poverty levels. Since economic status determines other aspects of life and living conditions, it is of utmost importance. Education for tribal women is an essential aspect of development. Education is a vital instrument to bring about a change in the cultural norms and patterns of life of the tribal women and to change their outlook and made them economically independent. It would help them to organize themselves to analyze their situations and living conditions and be aware of their rights and responsibilities. Education will enable them to take up jobs so that they can improve their situation. Social and economic status of the scheduled tribe to a large extent depends on the educational attainment. Educated women will be able to face the present day society better than earlier times. In the present context, no one can remain completely isolated, but they are influenced by the growth of modern society and culture. Government is providing a lot of support and grant for the education of Tribal students. This will help to increase the literacy rate and it will lead to the right way to development. The health status of the tribals is explored to assess their awareness regarding their health. Sometimes they lack the essential nutrients. Many times they suffer from various diseases as there is a lack of health and hygiene awareness. Thus increasing the literacy rate and providing opportunities for gainful employment for tribal women will be instrumental in bringing about a change in the status of tribal women in India and to handle to challenges successfully.

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