JOURNAL OF INDIAN AND AFRICAN STUDIES
Vol. 1 No. 1 (Jan-June 2025); pp 39-57

# Achieving Equitable, Sustainable and Empowered Tribal Development: The Case of Karnataka, South India

**Dr. D C Nanjunda**[1]
**Dr. Shivakumarswamy**[2]

## Abstract

The practice of promoting equitable and balanced development among tribal groups is known as equitable tribal development. It aims to redress historical wrongs and provide tribal communities with the liberty to fully participate in the social, political, and economic domains while maintaining their unique cultural rights and identities. The objective of equitable tribal development is to enhance the economic position of tribal communities. This can be achieved through promoting entrepreneurship, providing access to markets and financial resources, and supporting the development of sustainable livelihoods. It can also involve the establishment of economic opportunities both within and outside the tribal communities, as well as capacity-building programs. Access to basic infrastructure and services, such as healthcare, education, clean water, and sanitation, is often challenging for tribal populations. The current paper is based on the Karnataka Tribal Human Development Report-2022 prepared by author based on the field work done among 50 tribal groups of Karnataka state between 2020-2022.

**Keywords:** Tribal, Education,. Policy, Ashram school, Teacher, Karnataka,

## Introduction

The debate of the hour lies in empowering and uplifting the tribal populations while retaining their historical past, protecting their natural resources', and ensuring their socio-economic well-being over a considerable period. Tribal communities often lead isolated lives and tend to nurture strong bonds with the geographical location and their cultures, where they face many difficulties that act as barriers in their process of development(Bhattacharya, 2020).. They face constraints of

[1] Associate Professor, Centre for the Study of Social Inclusion University of Mysore- India Email: nanjunda@uni-mysore.ac.in Ph:9008164514

[2] Asst. Professor Department of Economics Karnataka Sate Open University, Mysore Email: **shivakumareconomics**@gmail.com

access to high-quality education, healthcare, and basic infrastructures; employment opportunities; and social facilities. Besides, issues of land rights, marginalisation, discrimination, and loss of cultural identity are frequently experienced by tribal populations. Sustainable tribal development is thus necessary for the flourishing, resilience, and exercise of the right to self-determination of tribal communities. It calls for an integrated policy that guards and defends their cultural identity, recognises their claims over their land and natural resources, opens doors for quality economic, educational, and medical facilities to them, and brings them in as a stakeholder into any decision-making process. Taking sustainable tribal development ahead and giving it precedence will serve the cause of the present and future generations toward the creation of a more just and harmonious society (Bistee and Sreeramulu, 2014).

Equitable tribal development focuses on the provision of suitable infrastructure and critical services to tribal areas so that equitable distribution could be ensured and gaps between tribal and non-tribal communities could be closed. Equitable tribal development would require collaboration and partnership among tribal communities, government entities, civil society organisations, and other stakeholders. It seeks to build a more inclusive and just society by addressing past marginalisation and advancing the self-determination and well-being of tribal communities. Tribal empowerment refers to enhancing the rights, self-determination, and general welfare of tribal or tribal populations. It acknowledges the distinctive cultural, social, and historical circumstances of these communities and seeks to give them the means, opportunities, and resources required for self-governance and self-determination. Tribal resiliency has various different facets and ongoing procedures that vary between different countries and tribal communities. There is a need for collaboration, inclusion, and a commitment to rectifying historical injustices and promoting tribal peoples' equity (Satpathy, 2017).

**Health and Education**

Implementation of policies and programs towards the improvement of the health and educational opportunities of the tribes also deserves attention. These policies and programs are responsive to the unique cultural, social, and historical backgrounds of tribal groups and target specific health and education problems facing the tribes. Because each tribal community has its unique needs

and interests, it is important to note that tribal health and education efforts differ across different tribal groups and locations. These efforts are aimed at building tribal capacity, improving health outcomes, and providing inclusive, sensitive, and historically respectful educational options. Tribal education programs work on the issues that include lack of school facilities, transportation, and resources within tribal boundaries to bridge gaps in high-quality education, which have to be done soon (Roy,1989).

**Income and Employment**

Income and employment levels in tribal communities can be significantly different depending on the location, availability of resources, economic opportunities, and the historical background. Some critical things to reflect upon related to work and income of tribal people are that the many tribals in India experience economic hardship due to infrastructure and resource inadequacy, unemployment, and geographic isolation. All these might be contributing factors toward a high rate of unemployment and poverty in the tribals. It's important to remember that different tribal communities may face drastically disparate economic environments and circumstances. Where some tribes have successfully established thriving businesses and have seen themselves grow economically, other communities continue to face dire problems such as unemployment and poverty. Federal aid, collaboration with other agencies, and tribal efforts together boost economic growth, job opportunities, and income opportunities in the tribal areas.

**Tribal Poverty**

High rates of poverty are found in the native or tribal population. Tribal populations are often beset with economic and social problems that make their poverty and deprivation levels higher than the general population. Tribal poverty is being addressed both by local and national initiatives. These include supporting economic growth, expanding educational opportunities, providing support to self-governance and self-determination efforts, and defending the rights of tribal peoples. Tribal governments, non-governmental organisations, and government organisations are working collectively to empower tribal people to address the causes of poverty and forge sustainable paths towards prosperity and well-being. Numerous native villages have

inadequate access to necessities like clean water, power, transportation, educational institutes, and healthcare facilities. A lack of essential infrastructure and services can stymie economic growth and prolong poverty (Mehta, 1991).

**Deprivation**

Comprehensive programs that uphold their rights, traditions, and self-determination are required to address tribal issues on an urgent basis. Taking an all-embracing speech, enhancing tribal rights and their representation, designing laws for their protection along with resources, and availing equal opportunities in employability, health care facilities, and educational services shall help them in achieving such development. Giving tribes decision-making authority in all things allows meeting specific needs and fulfilling the vision of sustainable development through tribal development that involves a varied spectrum of experiences and issues. These issues stem from the historical exclusion of the tribes and the ongoing struggle to protect tribal peoples' rights, traditions, and territories.

**Infrastructural deprivation**

Those members who are not treated to appropriate infrastructure and ordinary amenities are stated to suffer through "infrastructural deprivation." They commonly live in an isolated or marginalised location such that the basic infrastructural amenities, as well as their facilities, most of which easily find it hard to go. It will require extreme initiatives on the part of governmental officers, the legislature, as well as primary stakeholders so that it can be addressed within the tribal lines. The process includes undertaking the required investment towards basic infrastructure establishment, enhancing healthy as well as educational facilities in their localities, an easy transport system, and, above all easy access towards available sanitary services as well as the use of renewable sources (Baiju, 2011). Renewable energy is the best answer in this case.

**Vulnerability**

Exclusion, at some point, brings out vulnerability. Tribal vulnerability is the term used to describe how vulnerable tribal communities have many social, economic, environmental, and political problems that may have a disproportionately negative impact on their well-being and means of subsistence. Historical marginalisation is the key reason for this. The vulnerability has

become part and parcel of the tribal section due to its unique socioeconomic position, non-participation, and poor governance.

**Seasonal vulnerability**

There is a variety of vulnerability in the different populations of the state of Karnataka. The Soliga, Betta and Kuruba experience heavy shortages of food and water during summer months. All forest-based tribes are devoid of proper drinking water facilities; they face immense difficulty during the summer. They are drinking polluted water and suffering from different health conditions. The same extreme cold that is faced throughout the winter season also impacts some of the forest-based tribes during the rainy and winter seasons. They do not have enough clothing to keep themselves warm in such extreme weather conditions. Moreover, their home is in bad condition as well. Since they don't have money to buy supplies that would protect them from such weather catastrophes, they are facing a wide range of survival problems brought about by the winter and rainy seasons. Tribes also have a hard time reaching the market and other facilities during the rainy season due to road problems. Heavy rain is affecting the agricultural system. The lack of or too much rainfall causes problems for the water bodies and therefore affects the quality of human life negatively (Murthy, 2019).

**Vulnerability to Money**

Tribal people suffer from absolute financial poverty due to their poverty as well as lack of proper access to resources. The majority of them are never saving money and never earning a regular source of money. Most tribal individuals are unemployed, and without a good and reliable source of assets, they might fall prey to financial instability. In addition to that, through weather problems, they are generating very few income yields from agriculture as well as wage labour income. These environmental problems cause vulnerabilities to financial stability. It is not even the provision of bank financing to these tribal people without some forms of guarantee.

**Health vulnerability**:

Tribal people have specific lifestyles and may suffer from hereditary or non-genetic diseases for the entire duration of life. The study says cholera, jaundice, and malaria infection occur in some tribes of Karnataka. Also, due to the lack of proper machinery and staff management in the

tribals' primary health centre and community health centres in the region. They fail to reach hospitals in time due to their lack of proper communication systems and traditional health practices. The rising medical costs make it impossible for them to consult private hospitals. They might sometimes sell land, cattle, and other properties for the payment of medical costs. Some tribes do not sell stocks for monetary benefits because they have some religious beliefs against selling them.

Ignorance because of lack of awareness: Because of lack of awareness, un schooling, and other issues, they face ignorance. They occasionally run into bureaucratic ignorance, and occasionally certain tribal members exhibit ignorance when it comes to getting things done. Some tribal members are not particularly interested in receiving compositions that might be the result of flooding, rain, or other events. Most of the tribes are uninformed about the policies and programs of the government owing to unschooling and turmoil. Also, they do not know the procedure for composition or facilities claim. Some of the tribes are occasionally short of Aadhaar cards, ration cards, and other amenities because they do not know from where these things are issued. They do not possess the necessary skills to fill out the application form (Murthy, 2019).

**Vested interest vulnerability**

In some tribal villages, the study found that there was conflict between tribal and non-tribal groups as well as sometimes intra-tribal issues over access to and sharing of common resources, grazing animals, and unhealthy social practices like alcoholism and gambling. Such disputes can lead to violent altercations, property damage, wasted time, and the need to pay for advocates and the legal system.

Regular consumption of alcohol harms individuals for several illogical and irrelevant reasons. It is also leading to gender-related violence. Moreover, the forest department has denied permission to various tribal communities for accessing forest products. It is also facing some issues of animals grazing in the forest.

**Social Exclusion of the Tribes**

The tribals may be excluded socially for various reasons, like the economic, cultural, or historical forces. Because the tribal societies are varied, along with their histories and traditions, the specific causes and phrases of social exclusion among the tribes may vary.

An important note is that this holds. Some of the major causes are historical aspects, cultural distinctions, economic disparities, geographic isolation, stigma, and stereotypes. Social exclusion is one of the complex and highly prevalent problems that affect all civilizations across the world. Historically, tribal communities have experienced the most social exclusion by any group of marginalised groups, as they have faced institutional prejudices and marginalisation in many facets of their lives. There is an exigency for critical analysis that will look at illuminating social marginalisation that tribal groups go through and the effects of it on their socioeconomic progression, sense of cultural identity, and general well-being. Karnataka tribal people face social exclusion, poverty, illiteracy, and a gap in development. In fact, one of the historical factors for tribal social exclusion is poverty. Due to caste and class issues, people face social exclusion in metropolitan cities. Although caste is not there in the case of tribals, people are still facing some very critical issues that lead to their exclusion. Due to this exclusion, the tribes may not be able to participate fully in the process of social mainstreaming, and thus they trap themselves in poverty and an unstable economy (Chandrashekar and Chandrashekar, 2019).

The pace of the expansion of the economy in their area is highly correlated with poverty eradication. According to our study, the majority of the tribal people who reside in the southern regions of the state are more likely to experience poverty than those in northern Karnataka. Physical and social resources must be developed in tribal areas to have an impact on the tribes' poverty problem. Poverty eradication also helps to control resources and promote social inclusion. Social marginalisation is one cause due to which tribes are enduring deprivation for ages. At the same time, tribes face several problems in the form of discrimination, food insecurity, migration, and displacement that lead to significant social exclusion. Development and growth enhance economic opportunities, by which social inclusion becomes achievable. Growth will reduce social exclusion to the minimum possible. There will be a reduction in the rate of social exclusion if the poverty eradication program is well implemented in the tribal region. (Gangadharamurthy, 2019).

Social exclusion M of the tribes is a deep-seated problem that requires holistic and long-term solutions. Economic inequality needs to be addressed, along with access to education, good healthcare, and preservation of cultural heritage. If the cycle of social exclusion can be broken, it would be possible if tribal communities were involved meaningfully in decision-making

processes and supported by policies that are fair and inclusive. The government, civil society groups, and individuals should realize the rights and dignity of tribal populations and work together to create an inclusive society. Only through their combined efforts can they eliminate the obstacles that prevent tribal groups from participating in society and build a world where their voices can be heard, their rights protected, and their value enhanced. Tribal groups boast rich cultural traditions, time-tested wisdom, and vibrant social systems. Globalisation and dominating cultures, however, are forcing homogenization, a threat to their cultural identity. Displacement due to development initiatives, encroachment on their territories, and forced assimilation efforts all erode their unique cultural practices, languages, and belief systems. They need oxygen in their traditional economy. Because of this cultural marginalisation, social cohesion and resilience of the tribal societies are weakened. Further, the non-tribal society must also have a positive attitude toward the tribes. As a part of the country's development process, a huge social and economic transformation plan should be implemented in the tribal territories (Chandrasekhar and Chandrashekar, 2019).

**Gender issues**

There are many different tribal communities in India, and each has its own custom, tradition, and social structure. However, similar to many other societies, the gender issues in tribal communities are still prevalent and affect women's lives. In many tribal societies, there are clearly defined gender roles and responsibilities. Different tribal societies may have different gender dynamics, and these dynamics can be influenced by cultural, historical, and social variables. It is critical to understand that gender roles and expectations can vary greatly among others and within tribes. These roles frequently represent the particular requirements and purposes of the community. In many instances, men might be responsible for hunting, fishing, and war, while women may be in charge of farming, gathering, childcare, and other domestic activities. However, the latter can vary to a significant extent across tribes. Gender dynamics across different tribes can be quite difficult to generalize. Patriarchal values and power hierarchies are the primary issues here. Many Indian tribal societies are full of patriarchal traditions. There, the patriarchal heads hold power and dominate the decision-making processes. Hence, women face many restraints, and their opportunity to engage in social, economic, and

political activities is scarce. The power imbalances make gender inequality persist among tribal societies. Because they do not have ample educational opportunities, tribal women find it very difficult. One of their severe challenges is the unavailability or very limited accessibility of quality education for the tribe women.

The typical outgrowth of such problems from traditional gender roles as well as financial constraints comprises minimal enrolment, high dropout, and lack of alternatives for learning for girls and women (Behera and Basar, 2009).
Access to land as well as means of subsistence for the women is one of the hot topics. Tribal communities survive mainly through the resources available in land. Because of gender inequalities, women often have limited ownership or influence over the land and other resources. This puts them in a position to be unable to make any economic decisions of their own, and it maintains gender disparities and poverty. Moreover, ignorance limits access to better job opportunities and increases their vulnerability to exploitation and poverty. For tribal women, awareness as well as empowerment are essential needs. Among these communities, efforts are being made to address gender-related issues. Organisations, as well as government-run programs, are working on the empowerment of tribal women through education, career development, and skill building. For confronting patriarchal conventions and uplifting gender equality, awareness programs related to women's rights, legal literacy, and gender sensibility are being conducted.(Bistee and Sreeramulu, 2014).

A major social issue across tribal societies is gender violence that touches the lives of women across. Gender violence involves several forms of violence, such as forced marriages, acid attacks, female infanticide, sexual harassment, dowry-related violence, domestic violence, and honour killings. The Indian government has taken several steps to address gender violence, including the implementation of laws and policies such as the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redress) Act, and amendments to the Indian Penal Code to strengthen punishment for offences against women. Changing gender dynamics within tribes is also a possibility. Tribal societies, being a culture like any other, are fluid, and gender dynamics may change as time progresses.

Traditionally, gender roles and standards in tribal groups may be modified by factors such as urbanisation, globalisation, education, and external influence. Therefore, while some tribes may shift towards egalitarian gender roles, the rest may find them losing some of their traditional gender relations. Gender roles are largely viewed as complementary rather than competitive in primitive societies. Both men and women play roles that are considered crucial to the survival and development of society and contribute to its general well-being. Though tribal leadership arrangements differ, both men and women have at times held power. Many tribes operate through matrilineal or matrilocal systems whereby decision-making, descent, and inheritance are all passed on through the female line. Other tribes have a patriarchal leadership system. It is very important to understand their distinct customs and norms in order to fully appreciate the gender dynamics of each tribe (Basavarajaiah et al., 2014).

It is common for tribal societies to have complex kinship systems that impact social structures and relationships. Such kinship networks could impact obligations to society, marriage, inheritance patterns, and gender relations. It is also worth noting that such systems are bound to differ between tribes. Just like any other community, tribal cultures change and evolve. There have been several circumstances that make tribes undergo changes in gender dynamics due to colonialism, cultural assimilation, globalisation, and social development. Such complex changes will result in new opportunities and difficulties for the efforts of empowering women and promoting gender equality among tribal societies. It is important to address the issue of gender dynamics among tribes with cultural sensitivity, respect for diversity, and knowledge of each tribe's particular history and settings. Promoting inclusive discussion and tackling gender-related issues respectfully and cooperatively depend on acknowledging and appreciating the cultural diversity and viewpoints of tribal cultures. Multiple stakeholders must work together to address gender concerns in tribal communities.

Gender equality can be achieved only by recognizing and opposing patriarchal attitudes, enhancing access to education, ensuring legal safeguards, and fostering economic possibilities for empowering women. Tribal communities can unleash the full potential of their women and other marginalised genders and create stronger, more vibrant societies by building an inclusive and supportive environment. It is vital to have a sensitive stance while discussing gender among tribes and stay away from generalizations. When analysing and addressing gender-related issues

within tribal groups, it is crucial to comprehend the distinctive cultural environment and particular tribal dynamics. Furthermore, it is critical to encourage inclusivity, observance of human rights, and women's empowerment in these communities while also honouring their traditional norms (Singh and Sadangi, 2012).

**Tribal Involvement**

Tribal involvement refers to how actively communities participate in different processes of decision-making, policy-making, and development that either directly or indirectly have an impact on their lives. It gives importance to the consideration of tribal viewpoints, information, and cultural values in making policies and programs that affect their lands, resources, and overall welfare. The core of tribal participation is based on the values of self-determination and respect for the rights and sovereignty of tribal peoples. It recognises that tribal communities possess distinct knowledge systems, long-enduring traditions, and resource management practices that could greatly contribute to the resolution of contemporary issues such as environmental preservation, mitigation of climate change, and socioeconomic development. Three main reasons make tribal engagement important. First and foremost, it ensures that the choices that directly affect tribal lives have a say from tribal communities, thus exercising the right to self-governance and preserving their identity. Tribal engagement also results in more inclusive and equitable development by acknowledging and correcting the historical injustices and marginalisation of tribal peoples. Tribal engagement also encourages cooperation and collaboration between tribal people and outside parties, including governmental bodies, non-governmental organisations, and commercial enterprises. By fusing conventional wisdom with cutting-edge scientific methodologies and encouraging local ownership of projects, these collaborations can improve the efficacy and durability of development programs (Nanjunda, 2010).

It can be very diverse, for instance, in the form of establishing organisations and institutions led by the tribes, participatory development projects, co-management agreements, and consultation procedures. In all these instances, there is a great need to make sure that the tribal participation is not merely on paper but truly represents and is in control of the decisions made and affecting the tribe. Despite its importance, tribal participation frequently confronts difficulties and obstacles. Institutional impediments, a lack of resources and capacity, a language barrier, an imbalance of

power, and cultural differences are a few examples. Building trust, forming respectful collaborations, offering enough support, establishing inclusive spaces for communication and cooperation, and engaging in meaningful dialogue are all necessary for overcoming these obstacles. Obstacles to effective involvement are extremely important. Tribal tribes may not be well represented in decision-making structures and procedures ( Bistee and Sreeramulu, 2014).

Their voices and opinions could not be well represented, leading to policies and programs that failed to meet their needs and objectives. Tribal communities are likely to become even more marginalised, and their involvement is likely to be stifled by a lack of representation. Some tribal areas may not be familiar with procedures on development, laws, and rights of the members of the tribe. Limited knowledge may also hinder their ability to make smart decisions, represent themselves in court or other avenues for asserting their interests, and find their way through bureaucratic labyrinths. In addition, their capacity to have a meaningful voice in decisions could also be limited by a lack of ability, resources, and information ( Xaxa, 2001).

Meaningful engagement may, therefore, be hindered by power imbalances involving tribes and outside parties that include corporations, NGOs, and government officials. Tribal voices and interests are likely marginalised in decision-making processes stemming from unequal connections and the asymmetrical power dynamics. Meaningful participation of tribal groups involves consultation and engagement. However, true and inclusive consultation mechanisms that involve the tribal groups from the early stages of policy development and planning are often missing. Decisions may be taken without considering the specific needs and views of the tribal groups if there has been inadequate consultation and participation. Tribal groups often find themselves in disputes over land and resources due to conflicts between their rights and customary land-use methods and the construction initiatives, mining operations, or infrastructure growth. Such disputes may ruin tribal harmony.

These conflicts can upset the livelihoods and social systems of tribal people, and thus they are unable to participate in Inclusive development initiatives.
The way to overcome these barriers is through inclusive and participatory approaches, involving tribal communities in the decision-making process. These involve representation, capacity-building assistance, recognition of cultural diversity, ensuring consultation and engagement

effectiveness, and power inequalities. An enabling environment needs to be created for rights, dignity, and agency on the part of the tribal groups in directing their own development. Increase outreach programs to make the tribal members aware of participation opportunities. Do this by collaborating with tribal chiefs, running education programs, using local media, and holding town hall meetings. Ensure that tribal communities have updated and accurate information on governance schemes, policies, decision-making, and resource availability. Public forums, websites, social media, and neighbourhood newsletters are some of the means through which this can be assisted.

The development and enhancement of tribal government structures that may ensure effective decision-making and representation is very crucial. This may involve technical assistance, educational programs, and capacity-building initiatives for tribal councils, governments, and committees. Engage and empower the younger generation of tribal community members to participate in the decision-making processes for intergenerational participation. Create youth councils, leadership initiatives, and mentoring opportunities to encourage active participation among the youth on tribal affairs. Policies must be reviewed and revised if necessary at the local, regional, and national levels for inclusion and equitable representation of tribal communities. This will include consideration for the effect on tribal lands, resources, and rights when developing and implementing policies that ensure effective participation (Singh and Sadangi, 2012).

Lastly, advocacy and education campaigns are also key to the cause. This participation might be in the form of creating awareness of rights that the tribal women are endowed with and the struggles of such women. Such steps might include creating and engaging in campaigns, workshops, and community forums to discuss concerns like gender-based violence and accessibility to healthcare services. There is also advocacy among legislators to enact and back policies that will promote their well-being. Lastly, there is a need to promote participation from the tribes themselves in the development of rights and welfare of these people. It strives to actively involve them in policy-making and programmatic decisions that affect their lives while also recognising the intrinsic value of their knowledge and cultural legacy. Tribal engagement fosters meaningful empowerment and cooperation that leads to more inclusive and sustainable development for all.

**Governance**

Decentralised governance is a concept that provides the power to manage and make decisions in their affairs to local groups. As it ensures accountability, transparency, and effective delivery of programs and policy, good governance is required for tribal development. Tribal communities can make use of decentralised government for enhancing self-determination, community involvement, and attending to their special needs and goals. Good governance recognises the importance of tribal groups in decision-making processes. This means ensuring their active participation and substantial representation in policy formulation, implementation, and review. Some tools that can be used to achieve this include tribal advisory councils, consultations, and involving tribal leaders and representatives in government structures. Next, good governance respects and protects the rights of tribal peoples, including land ownership. It involves acknowledging and implementing legal systems, such as international agreements and state laws, that protect tribal rights and ensure full participation in decisions affecting them. Good governance promotes sustainable development strategies that ensure the welfare of the tribals and protect the environment. It emphasises equity in the distribution of resources, which incorporates the accessibility of basic services, infrastructure growth, and business opportunities. Specific needs and objectives of tribal communities must be considered in the formulation of policies and programs meant to facilitate their socioeconomic advancement. The Bhuria Committee recommended that the village traditional council be constituted and the authority be transferred to it. Institutions for tribal self-governance may be required to be modified. Good governance includes the smooth and effective implementation of policies and programs related to tribal development (Ramachandra Murthy and Hendrakumar, 2019).

This requires detailed planning, sound resource utilisation, and coordination among diverse government departments and agencies. Mechanisms for regular monitoring and appraisal should be put in place in order to assess the situation, identify the problems, and correct them for the required outcomes. Good governance here is also important with cooperation and joint ventures. Good governance provides the environment for interlinking governmental organisations, tribal communities, civil society organisations, etc. It also shows respect towards collaboration in tackling challenging problems associated with tribal development. Group discussions, working cooperatively, and group decisions will lead to more comprehensive and sustainable solutions.

Emphasis needs to be paid on the legal perspective about panchayats and scheduled areas. The gram sabha and panchayat powers and authorities are also in need of newer perspectives. The PESA of 1996, in short the Central PESA Act, is enacted to furnish tribal people in the nation with political influence. The Bhuria Committee must pay more attention to tribal councils as well. The PESA report by the Mungekar Committee demands fresh insight in light of the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution. The importance of tribal councils in implementing customary rules as efficient instruments for delivering justice must be recognised, and due acknowledgement given to them. (Xaxa, 2001).

The fundamental right of tribal tribes to self-government is recognised by decentralised governance. It entails giving tribes more control over decision-making and authority so they may make decisions about issues that directly affect their people, like land management, resource utilisation, cultural preservation, and social services. Tribal councils (Bhuria Committee) and other local institutions are encouraged to be established and strengthened as the principal decision-making authorities in decentralised governance. These groups should determine regional issues, allocate resources, and implement programs in a way that is representative of the tribal community. The participation and inclusion of marginalised groups within the tribe, such as women and young people, must be ensured.

Good governance for tribal development requires a multi-faceted approach that involves institutional strengthening, capacity building, legal and policy reforms, and community empowerment. Tribal communities must be actively involved in determining their development while honouring their cultural values, advancing their rights, and ensuring their general well-being. Despite the advancements, tribal governance still faces difficulties. Among these are a lack of resources, political exclusion, competing legal systems, and outside pressures that endanger tribal lands and resources. However, there are also opportunities for collaboration, development, and lobbying for better tribal administration and to tackle these problems. It is further recommended that every state enact its own Central PESA Act (Act No. 40 of 1996) as suitable to the need. NGOs need to struggle to get access to the government schemes meant for the tribes.

State government needs more powers if the matter is of tribes. Tribal governance is an instrument crucial for tribal communities to exercise self-determination, defend their rights, maintain their cultures, and solve the specific demands and difficulties they face. Tribal government promotes the overarching goals of justice, equality, and sustainable development by providing opportunities for tribal peoples to administer their affairs. For true and long-lasting partnerships between tribal people and the general public, there must be recognition and support for tribal governance. Decentralised governance for tribes must be implemented within a supportive policy and legislative framework (e.g., the PESA Act, 2006) with the active participation of tribal populations. It recognises the specific cultural, social, and economic circumstances of tribes and allows them the ability and autonomy to direct the trajectory of their development (Ramachandra Murthy and Mahendrakumar, 2019).

## Conclusion

Tribal development policies in Karnataka have the prime importance of providing a decent standard of living and socio-economic development for tribal groups. Tribal development policy must follow the principles of equity, sustainability, and empowerment in order to effectively solve historical injustices and make the community socially, economically, and politically empowered. In this critical analysis, essential elements are discussed that enable a policy to bring about equitable, sustainable, and empowered tribal community development. The prime issue with the tribal development issue is the lack of proper implementation and monitoring. Even when policies and programs are developed to support tribal development, they can be hard to implement and track. Many a time, effective implementation is defeated by lack of funding, bureaucratic hurdles, and corrupt practices. To effectively deal with tribal issues, it calls for an all-inclusive strategy that should respect and recognise tribal rights, involve them in the decision-making process, provide access to quality healthcare and education, protect land rights, and promote economic growth, which can ensure sustainable development with preservation of their cultural identity. Therefore, governments have to deal with tribal people, civil society organisations, and others as partners in solving such issues.

## References

_____ 2013. "Demographic Status of Scheduled Tribe Population of India. (2013). Retrieved May 7, 2021.

Baiju, K. C. 2011. "Tribal Development under Decentralised Governance in Kerala: Issues and Challenges". *Journal of Administration and Governance, 6*(1)8-21.

Basavarajaiah, D. M., Narasimhamurthy, B., Bharathi, M., and Naik, J. 2020. "Tribal Livelihood Status in Western Ghats", *Forest Research, 9:* 234.

Behera, M. C., and Basar, J. 2009. "Implementation of Development Schemes and Exclusion: A Study with Reference to Growth Education in Arunachal Pradesh", *The Oriental Anthropologist, 9*(2):86-98.

Bhattacharya, B. 2020. *Tribal Development in India: Problems and Prospects.* New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company.

Bistee, A. R., and Sreeramulu, G. 2014. "Status of Scheduled Tribes in Karnataka", *Indian Streams Research Journal, 3*, 1–5.

Chandrashekar, & Chandrashekar. 2019. "An Analysis of Socio-economic Status of Tribal Community Development in Karnataka: A case study of Mysore District". *ZENITH International Journal of Business Economics & Management Research, 9*(2).

Chauhan, A. 2021. *Sustainable Development Goals and Tribal Communities in India.* Jaipur: Rawat Publications.

Gangadharamurthy, K. 2019. Review of the Role of Integrated Tribal Development Projects (ITDPs) for Tribal Development in Karnataka. *JETIR Journal, 6*(6):67-78.

Government of India. 2011. *Report on Socio-economic Conditions of Scheduled Tribes Workers in KBK Belt-Orissa, 2008–09.* New Delhi: Ministry of Labour & Employment.

Government of Karnataka. 2018. *Annual Tribal Sub-plan (TSP) Report.* Bengaluru: Department of Tribal Welfare, Karnataka.

Gurulingayya. A. 2005. *Socio-cultural Study of Karnataka Golla Community.* Bengaluru: Shakti Prakashana.

Manjunatha, B. R., and Gangadhar, M. R. 2018. "Socio-economic Status of the Jenukuruba Tribal Women: A Case Study from the Chamarajanagara District, Karnataka", *Antrocom Journal of Anthropology, 14*(1): 129–137.

Mehta, P. L. 1991. *Constitutional Protection to Scheduled Tribes in India in Retrospect and Prospects.* Delhi/Chandigarh: H.K. Publishers.

Munmun, S. 2018. "Tribal Development: A New Vision for Transforming India", *International Journal of Recent Scientific Research, 9*(12): 30118–30121.

Nanjunda, D. C. 2010. "Ethno-medico-botanical Investigation of Jenu Kuruba Ethnic Group of Karnataka State, India", *Bangladesh Journal of Medical Science, 9:* 161–169.

Purohit, B. D., and Purohit, S. D. 1990. *Handbook of Reservation for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.* New Delhi: Jainsons Publishing.

Ramachandra Murthy, and Mahendrakumar. 2019. "Evaluation of the health status of tribal communities in Karnataka: A Case Study of Mysuru District", *Global Journal for Research Analysis, 8*(11).

Ranganatha, B. 2014. *Tribal Identity and the Implications for Political and Cultural Development: A Sociological Analysis*. New Delhi: New Delhi Publishers.

Rangaswamy, and Bharadi. 2018. "Socio-economic Conditions of Tribal People: A Case Study of Chitradurga District, Karnataka", *Iconic Research and Engineering Journals, 2*(5): 1011-1017.

Renuka, M., Rakesh, A., Babu, N. M., & Santosh, K. A. 2011. "Nutritional Status of Jenukuruba Preschool Children in Mysore District, Karnataka", *Journal of Research in Medical Sciences, 1:* 12–17.

Roy, B. C. 1989. *Tribals of Orissa: The Changing Socio-economic Profile.* Delhi: Gian Publishing House.

Roy, D. 2012. "Socio-economic Status of Scheduled Tribes in Jharkhand", *Indian Journal of Spatial Science, 30*(2): 26–34.

Roy, S., Hegde, H. V., Bhattacharya, D., Upadhya, V., and Kholkute, S. D. 2015. "Tribes in Karnataka: Status of Health Research", *Regional Medical Research Centre (ICMR), Belgaum, India.*

Satpathy, B. 2017. "Forest Rights Act Implementation in Odisha: Redressing Historical Injustices", *South Asia Research, 37*(3), 259–276.

Shinde, V. M. 2012. "Educational Scenario of Scheduled Tribes in Karnataka", *International Indexed Referred Research Journal, 1,* 26–27.

Singh, A., and Sadangi, B. N. 2012. "Livelihood Patterns and Resource base of Tribals in Koraput and Rayagada Districts of Odisha", *Indian Research Journal of Extension Education, 12*(1S): 307–312.

Taradatt. 2001. *Tribal Development in India with Special Reference to Orissa.* New Delhi: Gyan Publishing House.

Thara, E. T., and Nair, S. B. 2013. "Quality of Life of Tribal Population in Kerala", *Artha Vijnana, 55*(4): 437–452.

Upadhyay, V. S., and Pandey, G. 2003. *Tribal Development in India: A Critical Appraisal.* Ranchi: Crown Publication.

Wright, B., and Mohanty, B. 2010. Simlipal Tiger Reserve: Assessment of Recent Elephant Poaching and Protection Initiatives. *National Tiger Reserve Authority.*

Xaxa, V. 2001. Protective Discrimination: Why Scheduled Tribes lag Behind Scheduled Castes. *Economic and Political Weekly, 36*(29): 2765–2774.

Yadav, M., & Kumar, A. 2019. "An Empirical study of Determining Factors of Tribal Household Income: A Case Study of Tharu Tribe in India", *Human and Social Science Studies, 8*(1): 102–112.