

The Perception and Monitoring Of Developmental Activities – A Case Study among Kattunaika Tribes of Wayanad District.

Dr. B.M Rajesh Kumar.

HSST in Journalism, GHSS, Kolery Wayanad.673596 Kerala

ABSTRACT: *This paper aims at bringing out the concept of development according to the Kattunaika tribes and comparing it with the government's developmental activities. The paper also tries to elicit the knowledge of Kattunaika tribes about various development programmes introduced by the Department of Tribal Welfare. The paper compares and contrasts different definitions on development with the development perceptions of Kattunaika tribes. The paper combined different tools for data collection and analysis. Content analysis is used to compare and contrast different definitions of development and the survey method is used to obtain data from the tribes regarding their perception and knowledge of the concept. Closed observations of the tribes were made for analyzing the behavioral and attitudinal impacts as a consequence of their involvement in the process of development.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Wayanad, being situated on the laps of Western ghats with an altitude ranging from 900 to 2400 meters, shares the borders of the two neighboring states of Kerala. The district still carries the reminiscent of ancient civilization dates back to 1000 B.C. The tribal communities in Wayanad can broadly be categorized into three sections – agricultural labourers, Marginal farmers and forest dependents. Paniya and Adiya communities are traditionally bonded labourers and Kattunaika depend upon forest for their livelihood either as forest labourers or as collectors of forest produce. Kurichiyas and Mullukuruman are agricultural communities. The Kattunaika indigenous group seems to be one of the most vulnerable sections of the tribal communities of Wayanad. They suffer from social exclusion, are typically landless, and live in severely deprived circumstances. Although their social and economic vulnerability is accepted, there is no evidence regarding their developmental needs and custom build remedial measures.

II. HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Development is a much quoted word associated with the tribes. There are different definitions to the word development as they are coined by different institutions and organizations. Almost all the definitions of development point out the need for transformation that may require several associated changes to be adopted by the target group. To a great extent this is true, especially to the general public. The modern education, literacy, media habits, health services etc. could redefine the quality of human life. But tribal communities essentially remain very different from the mainstream public. Hence the words – aborigines and marginalized are commonly used to describe the tribal community. From this fundamental truth it can be clearly seen that these attempts of modern development will not benefit tribal communities in general and sometimes they may have an adverse effect too. There are different definitions for the term development. This paper tries to bring out an analysis of the definitions made by United Nations Organization and its subsidiaries. The definition has been undergone several revisions since the first report which was drawn in 1990. The timely additions contributed to the authenticity and continued efforts of UN and allied institutions.

In its first Human Development Report in 1990, the UNDP stressed upon the factor 'enlargement of people's choices'. It pointed out the development indicators such as Life expectancy, Literacy & knowledge and command over resources are essentials for a decent living. But the report also suggested that these indicators were failing as they were mere averages that concealed wide disparities in the overall population. Such variables show different tendencies in different social groups. The quantification of development was done by introducing the Human Development Index (HDI), incorporating the real purchase power, education and health. The report emphasized that if the essential choices are not available many other opportunities will remain inaccessible. This is proved to be true in the case of tribes of Wayanad. Despite the collective efforts of Governmental and Non Governmental agencies the tribal development concepts remain static till date. The UNDP report made a major step forward when they added a new catalyst- people's participation - to the concept of development. The report declared that people's participation is both a means and end in the process of development.

The UN report also points out that the governments of developing countries have a tendency to discourage a group action comprising the institutions like fair judiciary, responsive executive, free press and traditions of transparency, and fair play. The governments are interested in a top-down philosophy and focused on providing funded activities on food services and assets rather than empowering people through active participation. This comment is true when we examine the history and progress of tribal development activities in the country.

It was the Tribal Department who planned and executed the development programmes for the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes of the state till 1975. The total fund for the activities was 2% of the total budget. But that was a promise too hard to keep. Thus the Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) came into being in 1975. The formation of Tribal Sub Plan paved way for a collective tribal development approach. It funded for agriculture, animal husbandry, diary, co-operation, fisheries, soil preservation etc. through a District Working Committee chaired by the District Collector. The package, 'Pandavarethedi' thus operated in Wayand was introduced in 1986. The entire activities had undergone a serious revision with the advent of 'Panchayat Raj' in 1995. Through decentralized planning 50% of the Department and TSP funds were handed over to three tier Panchayats. The Panchayats were to find target beneficiaries through grama sabhas called Oorukootom. The whole programme was scheduled into four types – Education, Health, Socio –Economic uplifting and House construction programmes. If the TSP could be implemented successfully the tribes must have been transformed into active participants in the process of development .

Another interesting angle introduced by ICDP on development was the idea of 'Self Conception'. The definition said that "Human Development is a function of human awareness, aspirations, attitudes and values. Like all human creative process, it is a process of self conception". There are many examples to show how far the tribes of Wayanad stand from the real concept of oneself. In a recently released documentary "When Things Fall Apart", the interviewer asks one tribe whether he wishes to build a house. The reply came – "I feel that I have a wish to build the house!". What is poignant here that they doubt even their wishes. And if self conception is development, they are miles away! The 1997 report reviewed the challenges to eradicate poverty from human development perspective as it is found that poverty denies choices and opportunities for a standard life. The 2000 report argues on the Human Rights by introducing a set of free choices. It stressed on the role of different components like individuals, governments, NGOs, Corporates, policy makers, multilateral organizations etc. in transforming the potential of global resources for the true fulfillment of the concept. It defined human development as the process of enhancing human capabilities to expand choices and opportunities so that each person can lead a life of respect and value.

This paper is based on a survey among Kattunaika tribes on the perception and monitoring of such development efforts. At this juncture the definitions of self conception and human rights are to be analyzed in the perspective of tribal development. Do the governments and other development agencies enable tribes to realize the concept of one-self? Are they aware of their rights? What is their notion of development? This study tries to bring out the concept of development according to the tribes themselves and the level of perception of development activities among Kattunaika faction.

Objectives

- To assess the concept of development among Kattunaika tribes of Wayanad.
- To evaluate the level of perception of development activities by the Kattunaika tribes.

III. METHODOLOGY

The present study has relied upon primary data collected from 100 Kattunaika tribes under stratified random sampling. Equal number males and females were taken as samples. The data were collected through preparing a questionnaire developed after a pilot study. Variables like development schemes, general development norms, names of development agencies etc. were considered for the study.

Limitations

The conclusions of the study are based on the data collected from the Kattunaika tribes individually. The collected data could not be counter checked with the versions of different development agencies and tribal department.

Interpretation of Data

Out of the ten questions the first three are aimed at eliciting the concept of development by the tribes themselves.

Q.1. I love to live in

The present location with the group	In the town / region with or without the group	Near to forest
81	11	8

Of the 100 respondents 81% prefer to live in the present location with the tribal culture. 11 % have opted town region and 8% like to be near by forest. The result reinforces that the majority does have the traditional out look of life.

Q.2. The job I love to do

Government / Private job	Collection of forest produce	Labour on daily wages
17	25	58

To this statement 17% marked Government/private (white collar) job and 25% marked for collection of forest produce/agriculture which comes under traditional way of life. 58% like labour on daily wages. When asked why they had selected labour on daily wages they said they didn't have a choice!

Q.3. I wish to own

Electrified house and motor vehicle	Agricultural land	House hold articles
13	76	11

The third question chokes out the consumerist tendency and attitude towards asset and steady income generation. The first option electrified house & motor vehicle and the third option household articles show the consumerist tendency. 13% demanded electrified house and vehicle and 11% for household articles. When 24% marked to be consumerist 76% opted for agricultural land. From the above three questions the Kattunaika tribes had made their point on development. They uphold the tribal culture as 81% wish to continue their community living. 76% are aware of the importance of income generation through agricultural land ownership. In the case of job they understand that they have no choice other than labour on daily wages. Their wish for agricultural land and the matter of choice are interrelated. From the above analysis three conclusions are obtained.

- [1] Tribes prefer to continue their tribal cultural livelihood.
- [2] The tribes are aware of their lack of choices regarding job opportunities.
- [3] Tribes understand the importance of cultivable land for income generation.

Rest of the seven questions is included for testing the perception and monitoring the development activities. The questions are based on the four point development agencies efforts of the State, Central and other development agencies.

The questions four and ten indicate the educational programmes. Five and seven stand for the socio-economic uplifting programmes. Question number six and nine cover health awareness. Eighth question represents the NGO special plan. These questions test the knowledge level of Kattunaika tribes about different projects under the four tier development efforts. There is only one true option for each question. The true response represents the correct perception and other options indicate the lack of perception of the scheme.

Q.4. “Ayyankali memorial scholarship” is meant for

Health care	Education	Aid for self employment	Don't Know
91	2	6	1

Only 2% marked the right answer education. 91% believe it to be a healthcare programme and 6% think that it is Aid for self employment. One percent opted Don't Know option.

Q.5 Tribal promoters are more effective because

They speak in our language and culture	They have more education
19	81

This question indicates the attitude of Kattunaika tribes towards tradition and modern education. 81% favour education and 19% the language and culture. The analysis proves that the tribes have a positive attitude towards education but they lack perception regarding the educational schemes.

Q.6 “Food for Work” is done during the months of

January – June	June – September	October - January	Don't Know
81	7	11	1

Only 7% have correct perception on “Food for Work” programme. 92% perceived the term for the programme wrong. 1% said they didn't know the answer.

Q.7 “Oorukootom” (Gram Sabha) stands for

Settling disputes among tribes	Planning development activities for Ooru (Gram)	For recreation
14	84	2

Here 84% have the right notion about “Oorukootom” and they told about their active participation in such Gram Sabhas. Only 16% have marked the false option. The idea, ‘Development through Participation proves to be meaningful in the case of Socio-economic uplifting programmes.

Q. 8 Arogya Insurance is meant for

LIC policy	For TB, maternity care and other diseases	Not for tribes
53	20	27

20% have right perception about Arogya insurance. 27% think that it is not meant for tribes and 53% consider it as a LIC policy contributing 80% wrong perception about the scheme.

Q.9. “Sickle cell Anemia” is a

A genetic disorder	An epidemic	A curable disease
16	44	40

Only 16% know that sickle cell anemia is a genetic disorder. 44% marked it to be an epidemic and 40% a curable disease amounting to 84% of wrong perception. Ironically there had been a combined and continuing effort from both Government and Non Government Organizations for more than 20years on the awareness programmes of this disease.

Q.10 “Giridhara” is meant for

Education	Drinking water	Electricity	Don't Know
71	15	13	1

15% has given the right option whereas 71% marked it as the educational programme. 1% said that they don't know the answer and 13% says that it is electrification programme.

The above statistics shows that the Kattunaika tribes have incorrect perception regarding different development activities. Though they have positive notion on education only 2% knows to what “Ayyankali Scholarship” stands for. When majority knows the participatory socio economic programme Oorukootom, only 7% are aware of the plan period of “Food for Work”. Analysis of questions on perception of Health programmes gives alarming results as majority are unaware of the Arogya insurance scheme and much spelt ‘Sickle cell Anemia’. They are ignorant about what did “Giridhara” project for them.

IV. CONCLUSION

The present study brings out the fact that majority of the tribes perceives development within their cultural and traditional parameters. But their perception of development activities promoted by the State/Central governments and other development agencies proved to have marginal effect. An in-depth longitudinal study is required to evaluate the reasons of information lag between the development agencies and beneficiaries. It is time for the policy makers to redesign the development efforts with a view to access, perception and participation in the right perspective.

REFERENCE

- [1] Govind Chdra Rath, Tribal Development in India, Sage Publications India, 2006.
- [2] Planning Commission (1998). Report of the Working Group on the Prospects of Leasing out Degraded Forestlands to Private entrepreneurs/ Forest Corporations for production of industrial raw material, Planning Commission, Government of India, New Delhi.
- [3] Planning Commission (2003). Report of the National Mission on Bamboo Technology and Trade Development, Planning Commission, Government of India.
- [4] GOK. Tribal Sub-plan of Kerala. Trivandrum: State Planning Board. 1976.
- [5] Kumaran, C.V. Kerala Tribal Land Act: Problems and Prospectives - An Empirical Study with Special Reference to Wayanad. M.Phil diss., Cochin University of Science and Technology, Cochin. 1990.
- [6] Kunhaman, M. “Understanding Tribal Life: Kerala Dossier.” State and Society 4 (2).. 1983.
- [7] Human Development Reports 1990, 1993, 1995, 1996, 1997, 2000, 2003, 2004, 2006, 2007-08, United Nations Development Project.
- [8] <file:///H:/Ph D/Tribes Info/TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSIONERATE.htm>
- [9] Tribal Development Officer, “Ningalariyan (For your information) - A report on the developmental programmes for tribes”, Mananthavady, Tribal Department Publication, 2004.
- [10] Krishnan Vinod “Wayanad Initiative – A report on the Adivasi cause for a multifarious Developmental package”, Calicut, Indian Institute of Mangement, 2006.