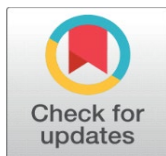
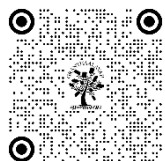


# STUDY OF THE DEVELOPMENTAL STATUS OF SCHEDULED TRIBES IN INDIA

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## ABSTRACT

The present study examines the developmental status of Scheduled Tribes (STs) in India, focusing on their socio-economic conditions, educational progress, health indicators, and overall quality of life. Scheduled Tribes, being one of the most marginalized and disadvantaged communities in India, have historically faced challenges related to poverty, illiteracy, poor health infrastructure, and social exclusion. This paper aims to analyze various government initiatives, constitutional provisions, and developmental programs implemented for the upliftment of tribal communities. The study highlights regional disparities, identifies key barriers to development, and evaluates the effectiveness of policies and schemes in bridging the gap between Scheduled Tribes and the mainstream population. Through a critical assessment of secondary data and reports, the paper also explores issues like displacement, land alienation, and cultural erosion faced by tribal groups. The findings of the study suggest that while progress has been made in certain areas, significant challenges remain in achieving inclusive and sustainable development for Scheduled Tribes in India.

**Keywords:** Growth, Government Policies, Regional Disparities, Marginalization, Sustainable Development, Social Exclusion

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The tribal communities in the Indian subcontinent are situated in the mountains, forests and in some part of the river's valley and some plain areas. According Indian government, the total tribal groups in India are 705 and they have some subgroups too. According to the Indian Census, 2011, the population of tribal's is 8.6% of the total population of the country. The numbers of tribal groups in Maharashtra are 47 and the population of tribal's in Maharashtra is 9.28%. These groups have suffered many outward attacks before independence. In order to be safe from the onslaught of external communities and the different empires, the hilly areas and jungles were quite helpful. Since then, they don't had much contact to the civilian life. Despite the independence of India, the tribals remained there only. These groups are economically backward, have been away from civilian life and also there's life in traditional form.

The constitutional provisions have been made by the constitution drafting committee for raising civilian life. for that Ministry of Tribal Affairs has been constituted to implement these provisions intensively. Also, the National Scheduled Tribal Commission has been established and the Ministry of Tribal Development has also been established in many states. Through this ministry, various developmental programs have been initiated to implement development up to the grassroot level.

Article 342, Indian Constitution, tribal groups are referred to as Scheduled Tribes. In order to develop these tribal communities politically and administratively, the reservation in political, administrative and co-operative have been made in the constitution of India. Some representative assembly constituencies at the state level have been reserved for the tribals as well as local self-government and co-operative institutions have been reserved for their representation. Accordingly, the attempts to implement strategic programs at the constitutional level. Apart from this, women reservation policy has been introduced to bring tribal women ahead. This is a constitutional attempt to strengthen women. In addition to this, in the administrative area of the Indian Constitution, provision has been made to give opportunity to the tribal's to reserve seats in the central-state and other local self-government.

After 10 years of the Indian Constitution came into existence, the tribal's were expected to fully absorb all these political and administrative services through reservation. It has not been intensively implemented. Since, seven decades have gone by the process of continuation of the reservation process needs to be repeated. It shows that constitutional bodies have also been weak in achieving development. Therefore, it is always a challenge of developing the tribal sub-plan for the Indian Governmental system. This is the topic of contemplation of the fundamentals. Therefore, the researcher has tried to study this subject.

- **Research objective:**

- 1) To study the developmental status of scheduled tribes in India.
- 2) To study the financial condition of Scheduled Tribes in India.

- **Hypothesis:**

- 1) Many developmental schemes are implemented for the development of Scheduled Tribes in India through the Government of India.
- 2) Even after 75 years of India's independence, the Scheduled Tribes have not achieved full development.

- **Study area:**

An effort has been made to implement various strategic development schemes central level for the development of Scheduled Tribes in India. To study its developmental position and identified the problems of execution. This is area of study.

- **Research Methods:**

The descriptive and comparative study methods have been used in this research. The secondary tools are based on the Data Collection. These include reports of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, National Commission for Scheduled Tribes, various Governmental decisions, Circulars, Census report, reference books, newspaper, informative books, and the more government websites.

**Identity of Scheduled Tribes:**

Generally, 'A group or community resides in a geographical region or from time immemorial or aboriginal, is tribal.' Such broad definitions can be defined.

Many researchers have used words such as Aboriginal, Primitive Tribes, Indigenous and Native, while studying tribal groups or communities. Each of these words has a social and political context. That can be said.

- **Scheduled Tribe in India:**

The Indian Constitution refers to Adivasi as 'Scheduled Tribes'. There are approximately 705 Scheduled tribes in India and their subgroup is also (sub-group). According to India census year 2011, the population of Scheduled Tribes is 8.6 percent. The Scheduled Tribes group resides in the hared areas of India's remote area, forest area, mountainous region and partly in the plains. This group is economically extremely backward. There are separate provisions in the Indian Constitution to parallel the development of their community, through these provisions, the intention is to achieve official development of social, political, administrative and economic nature.

- **Provisions mentioned in the Constitution of India regarding 'Scheduled Tribes':**

1) Article 366 (25), Indian Constitution: "Scheduled Tribes" means 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 purpose of this Constitution.<sup>1</sup>

2) Article 342 (1), Indian Constitution: The President<sup>3</sup> [many with respect to any state<sup>2</sup> [or Union Territory], and where it is a state<sup>4</sup>\*\*\*, after consultation with the governor<sup>5</sup>\*\*\* thereof,] by public notification<sup>6</sup>, specify the tribes or tribal

communities or parts of or groups within tribes or tribal communities which shall for the purposes of this constitution be deemed to be Scheduled Tribes in relation to that State<sup>2</sup> [or Union territory, as the case may be].<sup>2</sup>

3) Article 342 (2), Indian constitution: Parliament may by law include in or exclude from the list of Scheduled Tribes specified in a notification issued under clause (1) any tribe or tribal community or part of a group within any tribe or tribal community, but save as aforesaid a notification issued under the said clause shall not be varied by any subsequent notification.<sup>3</sup>

Apart from this, various provisions have been made in the Indian Constitution for the development of Scheduled Tribes in India.<sup>4</sup>

**1) Ministry of Tribal Affairs (1999):**

- Established under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- Responsible for policy planning, coordination, and implementation of tribal welfare programs.

**2) Development Programs:**

- Tribal Sub-Plans (TSPs): Main framework for ST development.
- Key Initiatives:

I) Integrated Tribal Development Project (ITDP)

II) Modified Area Development Approach (MADA)

III) Clusters for tribal communities

IV) Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)

V) Programs for dispersed tribal populations

**3) Funding Allocation:**

- Education: 40-50%
- Health: 10-15%
- Agriculture & Livelihoods (horticulture, AH, fisheries, dairy): 20-30%
- Income-generation schemes: 10-15%
- Administration & Research: <5-10%

**4) Constitutional Amendment (2003):**

- Article 338A introduced, leading to the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) in 2004.
- Role of NCST: Monitoring safeguards, investigating grievances, and advising on ST welfare policies.

These measures aim to ensure socio-economic upliftment and protection of tribal communities in India.

**Duties of the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST):<sup>5</sup>**

The Commission has the following responsibilities:

**a) Investigate and monitor-** all matters related to the constitutional and legal safeguards for Scheduled Tribes (STs) and evaluate their effectiveness.

**b) Inquire into complaints-** regarding violations of ST rights and safeguards.

**c) Advise and participate-** in the planning of socio-economic development programs for STs and assess their progress at both central and state levels.

**d) Submit reports-** to the President, annually or as needed, on the status of these safeguards.

**e) Recommend measures-** to the central and state governments for better implementation of safeguards and for the welfare and development of STs.

**f) Perform additional functions-** related to the protection, advancement, and development of STs as the President may assign.

Through these measures, the development of Scheduled Tribes is to be ensured, with a focus on eliminating their socio-economic disadvantages.

## 2. DATA ANALYSIS

- **Statistical Information on Development of Scheduled Tribes:**

### 1) Poverty

Sr. No.	Position of Poverty	Percentage
1	Poverty Percentage of Poor (Rural)	46
2	Poverty Percentage of Poor (Urban)	35
3	Poverty Agricultural Labour (Rural)	61
4	Poverty Causal Labour (Urban)	64

(Source: *Development Challenges in extremist affected areas, Report of an expert group to planning commission, Government of India, New Delhi, April 2008, Page No. 04.*)

This table illustrates the poverty ratio among Scheduled Tribes in India. The data raises questions about the effectiveness of development programs for Scheduled Tribes.

### 2) Mortality and under nutrition

Sr. No.	Mortality and Under Nutrition	Percentage
1	Infront Mortality (Per 1000 Live births) 2005-06	44
2	Under five mortality 2005-06	96
3	Proportion (%) of Children with Anemia	79
4	Proportion of Underweight children	26

(Source: *Development Challenges in extremist affected areas, Report of an expert group to planning commission, Government of India, New Delhi, April 2008, Page No. 04.*)

The above table shows an infant mortality rate of 44 per thousand. The under-five mortality rate stands at 96 per thousand, while the prevalence of anemia is 79%, and 26% of mortality cases are attributed to underweight conditions. This data is accurate and highlights critical health challenges. To address these issues, the government has implemented large-scale health and economic interventions, which have been reported as successful on paper. However, the statistics in this table raise concerns about the actual effectiveness, execution, and accountability of these measures.

### 3) Access to Agricultural land and capital assets

Sr. No.	Type	Percentage
1	Value of Assets per HH in Rupees (1992)	52,660
2	Percentage of self-employed cultivators	48%
3	Percentage of wage labour (Rural)	49%
4	Percentage of Casual Labour (Urban)	26%

(Source: *Development Challenges in extremist affected areas, Report of an expert group to planning commission, Government of India, New Delhi, April 2008, Page No. 04.*)

In this chart shows, every scheduled tribe family gets the same annual income of Rs. 52,660/- (from the 1992 report), Also, employment is not available adequately.

### 4) Literacy Rate

Sr. No.	Men / Women	India	Maharashtra
1	Men	68.53%	74.3%
2	Women	49.35%	57.0%
3	Total	58.96%	65.7%

Source: *Tribal Profile at a Glance, May 2004 (Registrar General of India, Census 2011)*

In the table indicates that, the literacy rate of Scheduled Tribes (STs) in India is just 58.96%, which is significantly lower compared to the national average and India's developmental goals. In some regions, the literacy rate among Scheduled Tribes is even below 50%.

In Maharashtra, the overall literacy rate is 65.7%, but the female literacy rate among STs is only 57%, highlighting a concerning disparity. Despite the Ministry of Tribal Affairs allocating 40-50% of its budget to education and various state-level educational programs being implemented, the progress remains slow.

#### 5-1) Percentage of Scheduled Tribes households in various position Of these 2)

Sr. No.	Position	India	Maharashtra
1	Good	39.8%	48.0%
2	Livable	53.9%	44.1%
3	Dilapidated	06.3%	07.9%
4	Total	100.0%	100.0%

Sr. No.	Material of roof	India	Maharashtra
1	Grass / Thatch / Bamboo / Mud	18.6%	9.7%
2	G.I./ Metal / Asbestos / Sheets	19.5%	30.4%
3	Grass / Thatch / Bamboo	16.2%	19.9%
4	Mud / Unburnt brick	48.0%	33.6%

(Source: House Listing and Housing Census, 2011)

This table indicates that, 95.6% of Scheduled Tribes families have houses. But they have large number of crude houses. Therefore, it may be time to face any catastrophe occasion. e.g. It was time to lose the same to many families in Malin Village of Ambegaon tahsil in Pune district of Maharashtra on 30<sup>th</sup> July, 2015.

#### 6) Main Source of Drinking Water

##### 1) Drinking Source

Sr. No.	Water Source	India	Maharashtra
1	Covered well	01.9	03.6
2	Uncovered well	19.8	21.1
3	Handpump	40.6	19.2
4	Tubewell / Borehole	07.8	03.9
5	Spring	03.1	01.4
6	River / Canal	02.0	01.0
7	Tank / Pond / Lake	01.1	00.5
8	Other	01.2	00.9
9	Tap water from treated source	-	34.2
10	Tap water from untreated source	-	14.1

##### 2) Water Source Location

Sr. No.	Location of Drinking water	India	Maharashtra
1	Within Premises	18.0%	33.9%
2	Near Premises	47.6%	43.3%
3	Away	34.3%	22.8%

(Source : House Listing and Housing Census, 2011)

In both tables indicate that, a significant portion of Scheduled Tribe (ST) families in India lack access to safe drinking water within their living premises. While 34.03% of ST families nationwide must fetch water from outside their homes, the figure stands at 22.08% in Maharashtra. Given that many water sources are likely contaminated or non-potable, these communities face heightened risks of waterborne diseases. This situation highlights a critical public health.

### 7) Main Source of Lighting

Sr. No.	Source of Lighting	India	Maharashtra
1	Electricity	50.0%	59.8%
2	Kerosens	47.3%	36.2%
3	Solar Energy	01.1%	01.2%
4	Other oil	00.3%	03.3%
5	Any other	00.0%	00.4%
6	No lighting	01.0%	02.0%

(Source : House Listing and Housing Census, 2011)

According to above data, 50% of ST families in India and over 40% in Maharashtra live without electricity, forcing them to rely on other sources (47.3% in India and 36.2% in Maharashtra). The absence of reliable electricity severely impacts education, livelihoods, and overall quality of life. this is a major problems for ST communities.

### 8) Number of households not having latrine facility

#### 1) Within the Premises

Sr. No.	Latrine Facility	India	Maharashtra
1	Not have	79.4%	69.9%

#### 2) Alternative Source

Sr. No.	Source	India	Maharashtra
1	Public Latrine	02.4%	10.2%
2	Open	76.9%	59.7%

(Source : House Listing and Housing Census, 2011)

Sanitation and Open Defecation Crisis- In both tables shows Sanitation facilities among ST households. Only 20% of ST families in India and 30% in Maharashtra have access to latrines, leaving the majority (76.9% in India and 59.7% in Maharashtra) with no choice but to defecate in open spaces. Despite government subsidies for toilet construction, countless families remain excluded from this basic necessity, raising serious questions about policy implementation and equity.

### 9) Number of households having bathing facility

Sr. No.	Material of roof	India	Maharashtra
1	Bathroom	15.1%	37.2%
2	Enclosure without roof	14.2%	29.9%
3	No bathing facility	70.7%	32.9%

(Source: House Listing and Housing Census, 2011)

Absence of Bathing Facilities- A staggering 70.7% of ST families in India and 32.9% in Maharashtra lack proper bathing facilities, compelling them to use rivers, lakes, wells, or other unsafe water bodies. This not only poses a risk to personal hygiene but also increases the risk of dermatitis and infection.



**10) Waste water outlet connected to**

Sr. No.	Drainage	India	Maharashtra
1	Closed Drainage	04.8%	15.7%
2	Open Drainage	15.8%	25.7%
3	No Drainage	79.4%	58.6%

(Source : House Listing and Housing Census, 2011)

Poor drainage system and health hazards- The above data shows that, the lack of proper drainage system worsens the quality of life of ST communities. 97.4% of ST households in India and 58.6% in Maharashtra have no drainage facilities, leading to stagnant water and unsanitary environments. This becomes a breeding ground for diseases, further marginalizing these already vulnerable populations.

**11) Type of Fuel used for cooking**

Sr. No.	Material of roof	India	Maharashtra
1	Fire wood	80.5	70.0
2	Crop residue	06.5	05.0
3	Cow dung Cake	02.7	01.0
4	Coal, Lignite, Charcoal	00.9	00.2
5	Kerosene	01.1	03.9
6	LPG / PNG	07.3	18.9
7	Electricity	00.1	00.1
8	Biogas	00.2	00.2
9	Any Other	00.6	00.1
10	No cooking	00.2	00.5

(Source : House Listing and Housing Census, 2011)

This table shows that, 80.05% in India and 70% of Scheduled Tribes in Maharashtra are dependent on wood for cooking purpose. This is the worst picture in the country.

**12) Total number of household availing banking facility**

Sr. No.	Baking Services	India	Maharashtra
1	Available	44.2%	47.9%

(Source : House Listing and Housing Census, 2011)

Limited Access to Banking Services- According data, financial inclusion remains a distant reality for many ST families. 48.10% in India and 45.80% in Maharashtra lack access to banking services, primarily due to the urban concentration of banks. While government schemes promote account openings for welfare benefits, rural ST communities continue to face systemic barriers in accessing these services.

**3. CONCLUSION**

Persistent Inequities and the Need for Stronger Interventions- Despite India's developmental progress over the past 75 years, Scheduled Tribes remain disproportionately marginalized. Growth rates among ST communities lag significantly behind other groups, even with targeted policies. The persistent gaps in water, sanitation, electricity, and financial inclusion underscore systemic failures in governance and implementation.

**To bridge these disparities, the following measures are critical:**

- Stronger political will and accountability in tribal welfare programs.
- Enhanced collaboration between government agencies, NGOs, and community volunteers.

- Grassroots participation to ensure policies reach the most vulnerable.
- Empowerment of ST representatives to advocate effectively for their communities.

Without urgent and sustained efforts, the exclusion of Scheduled Tribes from India's development narrative will continue, perpetuating cycles of poverty and inequity.

## **CONFLICT OF INTERESTS**

None.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

None.

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