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Endangered Life Of Tribes Due To Development, Displacement And Resettlement

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Abstract: The tribals in India are the most adversely affected ethnic group due to development in post Independence India. Tribals are scarified at the altar of God named 'Development' that has failed. But the National conscience is not disturbed at all by the refuges of development. Forceful displacement of tribals from their lands and natural habitats due to various developmental activities has for long been a serious problem. The present study was conducted among the displaced tribes of Sardar Sarovar project in Nandurbar district and found that these tribes are affected personally, socially and economically and totally dissatisfied with quality of rehabilitation and resettlement made. Inadequate rehabilitation of the displaced tribals compounds their woes making them asset-less and unemployed, trapped in debt bondage.

Keywords: Tribal's, dam, displacement, social problems etc.

1.0 Background:

India is a country with the largest tribal population in the World. These tribes are considered original settlers, they are still living in rural, forest and mountain areas and prove that they have been living here from very ancient times. The Scheduled tribes population of the country, according to 2001 Census, was 8,43,26,000 and constitutes 8.20% to the total Indian population. But about 40% of them are displaced persons due to modern development projects. Truly, they are victims of and refugees of development.

The land of tribes is taken away for developmental projects. From food gathers, Craftsman and Farmer, today they have become agriculture labors, landless labors, bonded labors, seasonal laborers (sugar cane cutters), wage earners and unskilled labors. In rehabilitation sites the problems of backwardness, exploitations, underdevelopment, illiteracy, malnutrition, alcoholism, indebtedness, conversion and poor human development has been

challenge for Government and NGOs till today.

2.0 Development and Displacement

According to Government of India estimate, between 1981-85 the coal mine alone had displaced 1,80,000 persons and had provided one job per family to only 36 percent. In Jharkhand the tribal land alienation and displacement have been going on from 1907 with the establishment of Tata Iron Steel Company. The magnitude of land and number of displaced persons has been increasing since then (Singh, A.K. 1996). It has been estimated that about at least 185 lakh persons have been displaced by the development projects during 1951 to 1990 (Fernandes, 1995)

3.0 Dam and Displacement:

India now boasts of being the World's third largest dam builder. According to

Central water commission, the country has 3600 dams that qualify as big dams, 3300 of them build after Independence. 1,000 more are under construction. Yet one fifth of our population, 200 million people does not have safe drinking water and two third, 600 million lack basic sanitation.

During the inauguration of Panchet hill dam across Damodhar River in 1959, Nehru said, “Dams are the temples of Modern India.” Dam building is equated with Nation building. While speaking to villagers displaced by Hirakund dam, Nehru expressed, “If you are to suffer, you should suffer in the interest of country.”

Moraji Desai speaking at a public meeting in the submergence zone of the Pong dam in 1961 said, “We will request you to move from your houses after the dam comes up, if you move it will be good,

otherwise we shall release water down on you all” The above statements of the Great leaders reveal the intensity that have been cherished by the power centers towards the people, who are negatively affected by the project. (Roy, 1999)

According to a detailed study of 54 large dams conducted by Indian Institute of Public Administration, the average number of people displaced by large dams is 44,182. If 10,000 people are displaced per dam as compared to 3300 dams, thirty million people are displaced by the dams alone in the last fifty years only. According to secretary of planning commission N.C. Sexena, 50 million people are displaced in this region of which 40 million were displaced by the dams only. 50 million is more than a population of states like Gujarat.

Dams and Displacement of Tribal People

No.	Name of the Project (*)	State	Population facing Displacement	Tribal people as percentage of displaced
1	Karjan	Gujarat	11,600	100%
2	Sardar Sarovar	Gujarat	2,00,000	57.6%
3	Ukai reservoir	Gujarat	52,000	18.92%
4	Maheshwar	Madhya Pradesh	20,000	60%
5	Koel Karol	Bihar	66,000	88%
6	Mahi bajaj sagar	Rajasthan	38,400	76.28%
7	Upper Indrawati	Orrisa	18,500	89.20%
8	Pong	Himachal Pradesh	80,000	56.25%
9	Inchampalli	A.P.- Maharashtra	38,100	76.28%
10	Tultuli	Maharashtra	13,600	51.61%

(*) Projects are either under construction or have been planned.

Source: Satyajit Singh, taming waters OUP, 1997 and Govt. figures.

Huge percentage of displaced in the above projects are the tribal people. If we consider tribal people account for only 8% of the India’s population, it opens up whole other dimensions of a story. India’s poorest people are subsidizing the life style of her richest. Displacement affected the total livelihood of tribes.

Adivasi’s believes, “The soul of their fore fathers lives in the forest.” They cannot fulfill life and culture without forest. The socio-economic life of tribes was depended on, ‘Water, forest and land.’ The tribes are forcefully displaced from generation to generation for various reasons under the name of development.

The self sufficient life of tribal was always introduced by selfish and ambitious people.

Former Commissioner of Scheduled Castes and Tribes Commission, Dr. B.D. Sharma noticed in his report that, “The 10-15% of Adivasi are displaced and deserted by various causes.” To build Nation, one is ruined for one’s development. And it comes to the share of poor adivasi.

4.0 Rehabilitation/ Resettlement:

The rehabilitation of project affected people has always been recognized as storm of conflict. The projects have created various problems like displacement, resettlement, socio-economic exploitation and environmental disasters to tribal life. The developmental project submerged the tribal houses, fields, villages, forest not only ruined present status, but given pain for many generations.

It is very true that the rehabilitation of displaced person will never be satisfied. The resettlement created disharmonious relation among local tribals, was never in the history of tribes. Due to improper rehabilitation facilities, many displaced persons have lost economic status and many other problems come out.

In view of the above, the present study was conducted to understand the problems of displaced tribals due to Sardar Sarovar project in Nandurbar district of Maharashtra with the following objectives.

5.0 Objectives:

1. To study the nature of acceptance of displacement and resettlement.
2. To study the problems of displacement and resettlement of Tribals.
3. To study the causes of dissatisfaction.

4. To study the problems faced by respondents after resettlement.

6.0 Methodology:

This paper is based on primary data collected on the problems faced by the tribal community at rehabilitated site with help of an Interview schedule. The respondents selected for study was affected by Sardar Sarovar project on Narmada River rehabilitated at Maharashtra site. According to Maharashtra State Government report on Sardar Sarovar project rehabilitation department, there are 1168 families rehabilitated at various sites. For the study 100 families were selected using Simple random lottery method.

The interview schedule covers the information on nature of acceptance of displacement, satisfaction with quality of remuneration and rehabilitation, causes of dissatisfaction, personal, social and economical problems faced by the respondents. The responses were recorded in schedule.

7.0 Results and Discussion:

Table No. 1: Acceptance of displacement

No.	Nature of Acceptance of Changes in Life	Total
1	Pressure from Govt. officials	81
2	Don't have any choice other than acceptance	19
	Total	100

Table No.1 shows the nature of acceptance of displacement, due to various forces. Regarding the nature of acceptance of displacement, majority i.e. 81% of respondents expressed that they are pressurized by Government officials and 19 % did not have any choice other than

accepting it showing their helplessness and vulnerability.

Table No. 2: Satisfaction with the Quality of Remuneration & Rehabilitation against Displacement

No.	Level of Satisfaction	Total
1	Fully Satisfied	38
2	Not satisfied	62
	Total	100

The table no.2 highlights that in general good majorities (62%) of the respondents are not satisfied with the quality of remuneration and rehabilitation against displacement. The satisfaction is found to be as less as 38%.

Table No. 3: Causes for Dissatisfaction

No.	Causes For Dissatisfaction (*)	Total (N=100)
1	Subsistence Allowance is not given	25
2	Agriculture land is not given	19
3	Agriculture land is not transferred legally	14
4	Lack of irrigation	31
5	Lack of community facilities	88

(*) Multiple Responses

The table no.3 reveals the causes of dissatisfaction. Majority (88%) of the respondents did not receive community facilities like community hall, bus stand toilet etc, 31% had lack of irrigation, 25% were not paid subsistence allowance, 19% did not receive agricultural land and 14%

Table No. 4: Major Personal Problems faced

No.	Major Personal Problems faced (*)	Total (N=100)
1	Experience psychological pressure by non-tribal	64

2	Received ill treatment by Government officials	78
3	Unaware of schemes due to Illiteracy	54
4	Unaware of Constitutional measures and Protective Acts	69
5	Feeling of backwardness and inferiority	57

(*) Multiple Responses

The table no.4 discloses the major personal problems faced by respondents due to displacement and resettlement when 78% of the respondents received ill treatment by government officials, 69% of them claimed that they are unaware of Constitutional measures and Protective Acts, 64% experienced psychological pressure by non-tribal, 57% had feeling of backwardness and inferiority, 54% said that they are unaware of schemes due to illiteracy.

Table No. 5: Major Social Problems faced

No.	Major Social Problems faced (*)	Total (N=100)
1	Exploitation by non-tribals	25
2	Ignorance by Government officials	39
3	Lack of social support from non-tribals	59
4	Lack of active leadership to enjoy rights and privileges	69
5	Feeling of hopelessness, disadvantages	45

(*) Multiple Responses

The table no.5 discloses the major social problems faced by respondents due to displacement and resettlement .Nearly 70% said that they lack active leadership to enjoy rights and privileges, 59% of the respondents do not get any support from non-tribals, 45% had feeling of hopelessness and disadvantages,

39% feel ignored by Government officials and 25% are exploited by non-tribals.

Table No. 6: Major Economic Problems faced

No.	Major Economic Problems faced (*)	Total (N=100)
1	Insufficient Income due to unproductive agriculture	85
2	Indebtedness	19
3	Seasonal unemployment	39
4	Incapable for secondary and tertiary occupations	35
5	Lack of exposure to outside areas for skills and capacity development	28

(*) Multiple Responses

Table no.6 reveals the major economic problems faced by the respondents **due to displacement and resettlement**. Insufficient Income due to unproductive agriculture was the most cited problem for a great majority (85%) of them. When seasonal unemployment and incapability to enter into secondary and tertiary occupations accounts for nearly one third of them, a quarter of them lack exposure to outside areas for skills and capacity development. Another major obstacle like indebtedness seems to be a problem for 19% of the respondents.

8.0 Conclusions:

Forceful displacement agitated the tribes, broke their attachment with Land, Forest and River (Goddess of their civilization) to accept wishless migration into the trap of resettlement.

Issues regarding displacement and resettlement have created tensions among tribals and administrators. Tribes have fallen into trap of ignorance, ill treatment,

psychological pressure and exploitation by non-tribal and government officials.

Though resettlement has taken place, it covered only shifting of houses and live stocks, allotment of agricultural land with or without irrigation etc; but completely ignored personal, social, economical and psychological distress due to displacement.

The status of tribals at resettled colonies is deplorably low due to insufficient income, indebtedness, unemployment, adoption of primary occupations and inactive institutional setup. This has further resulted to raise problems like illiteracy, poverty, malnutrition, poor technology and lack of leadership.

The analysis shows that though government has taken all the care for resettlement of tribal community, many are still facing problems due to faulty strategy, failures of schemes and programs, and inappropriate efforts to bring tribal resettlement.

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