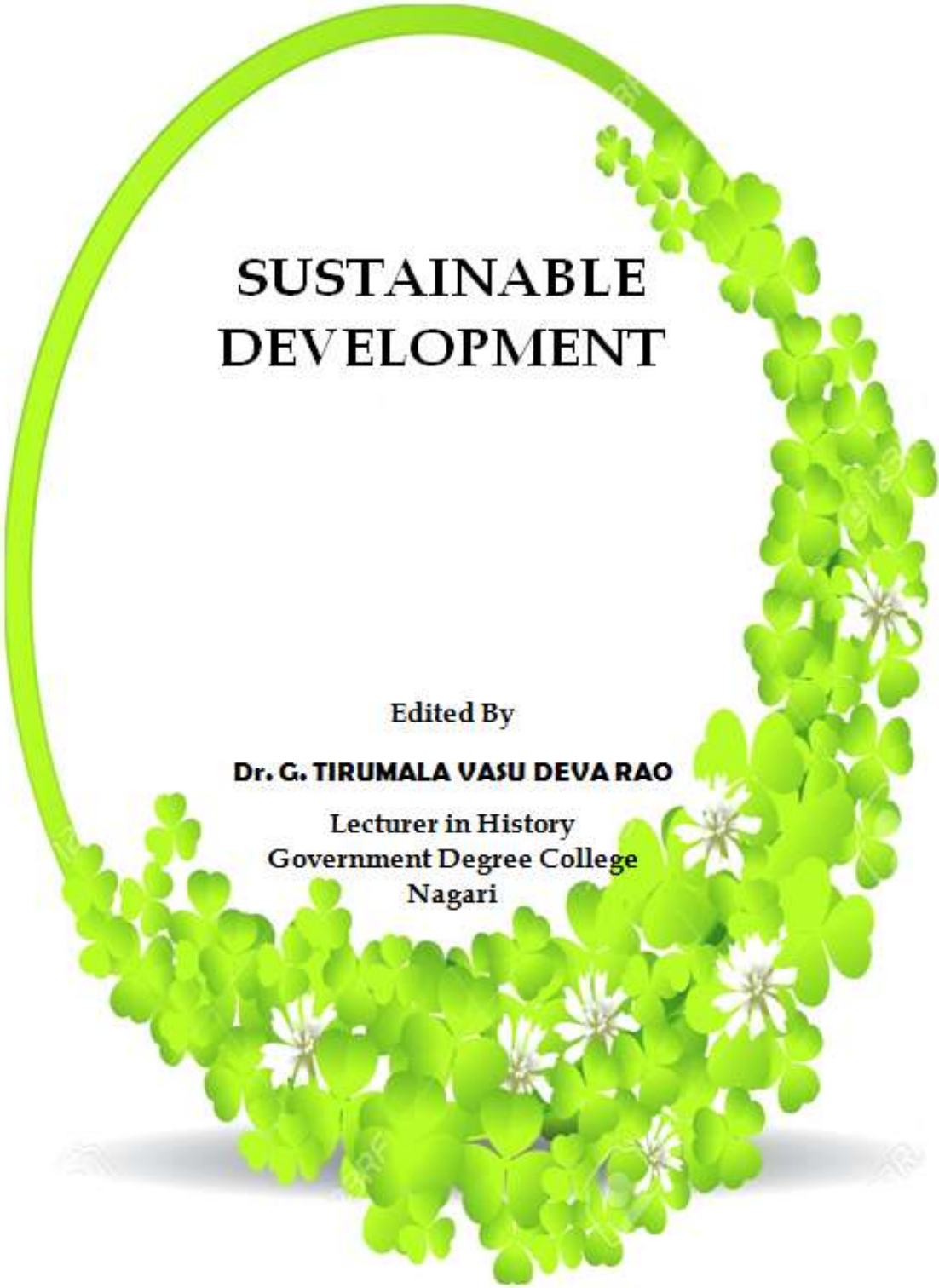


SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



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Edited by
Dr. G. TIRUMALA VASU DEVA RAO



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PREFACE

This edited book, Sustainable Development, is divided into two parts. Part I of the book focuses on the Biodiversity- sustainable development, Biological diversity - or biodiversity - is the term given to the variety of life on Earth and the natural patterns it forms. This diversity is often understood in terms of the wide variety of plants, animals and microorganisms, but also includes genetic differences within species and the variety of ecosystems. Biological resources are the pillars upon which we build civilizations. As a result, our personal health, and the health of our economy and human society, depends on the continuous supply of various ecological services that would be extremely costly or impossible to replace. Any sustainable development framework must provide the enabling conditions for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, for more equitable sharing of benefits, and for reducing the drivers of biodiversity loss

Part II of the book focuses on the Socio-Economic factors- sustainable development, One of the ways to reach the balance between the production, consumption and the natural environment is recycling, treated as an essential element of the mutual dependencies of dynamic relation between theses spheres, and thus at the same time an important condition of the human society existence, both in the global and the local dimension. The socio-economic aspect of the sustainable development shows that the broadly understood ecological problems were discussed within a deep human, social and philosophical perspective, and thus it covered the spheres of: values, attitudes, behaviours, as well the ecological consciousness.

The book came into light due to the authors who have contributed their work. Therefore, we acknowledge and thank the contributing authors; In case of any error we would like to receive feedback so that it could be taken into consideration for next work.

(Dr. Tirumala Vasu Deva Rao)

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THEME:
**BIODIVERSITY - SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT**

CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY

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INTRODUCTION

India, a megadiverse nation, is one of the richest nations in terms of biological diversity. India owes this to its position in the tropical and subtropical latitudes. India has a great diversity of natural ecosystems ranging from the cold and high Himalayan regions to the sea coasts; from the wet north-eastern green forests to the dry northwestern arid deserts; with different types of forests, wetlands, islands and the oceans. India consists of fertile river plains and high plateaus and several major rivers, including the Ganges, Brahmaputra and Indus. The diverse physical features and climatic situations have formed ecological habitats like forests, grasslands, wetlands, coastal and marine ecosystems and desert ecosystems, which harbour and sustain immense biodiversity. The country is also one of the 12 primary centres of origin of cultivated plants and domesticated animals.

Why Conserve Biodiversity?

As we all know by now, Biodiversity is essential for maintaining the ecological functions, including stabilizing of the water cycle, maintenance and replenishment of soil fertility, pollination and cross-fertilization of crops and other vegetation, protection against soil erosion and stability of food producing and other ecosystems. Conservation of biological diversity leads to conservation of essential ecological diversity to preserve the continuity of food chains. Biodiversity provides the base for the livelihoods, cultures and economies of several hundred millions of people, including farmers, fisher folk, forest dwellers and artisans. It provides raw material for a diverse medicinal and health care systems. It also provides the genetic base for the continuous up-gradation of agriculture, fisheries, and for critical discoveries in scientific, industrial and other sectors. The rapid erosion of biodiversity in the last few decades has impacted on the health of the land, water bodies and people. Biodiversity is a wealth to which no value can be put. In the final analysis, the very survival of the human race is dependent on conservation of biodiversity. It is evident that this invaluable heritage is being destroyed at an alarming rate due to several reasons. Measures are being taken up at national and international levels to address this issue. The Earth Summit produced a plan of action on a number of issues (Agenda 21) including conservation of biodiversity during the 21st century. Conservation and sustainable use of biological resources based on local knowledge systems and practices is ingrained in Indian ethos. The country has a number of alternative medicines, like

Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathic systems which are predominantly based on plant based raw materials in most of their preparations and formulations. Herbal preparations for various purposes including pharmaceutical and cosmetic form part of traditional biodiversity uses in India.

There are several strategies which are adapted for conservation of Biodiversity.

Some of these are:

1. Legislation

Formal policies and programmes for conservation and sustainable utilisation of biodiversity resources dates back to several decades. The concept of environmental protection is enshrined in the Indian constitution in articles 48a and 51a(g).

Major central acts relevant to biodiversity include:

- Environment Protection Act, 1986
- Fisheries Act, 1897
- Forest Act, 1927
- Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980
- Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972 and Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act 1991

The various central Acts are supported by a number of state laws and statutes concerning forests and other natural resources. The policies and strategies directly relevant to biodiversity include National Forest Policy amended in 1988, National Conservation Strategy and Policy Statement for Environment and Sustainable Development, National Agricultural Policy, National Land Use Policy, National Fisheries Policy, National Policy and Action Strategy on Biodiversity, National Wildlife Action Plan and Environmental Action Plan.

2. In-situ Conservation

Conserving the animals and plants in their natural habitats is known as in situ conservation. The established natural habitats are:

- National parks and sanctuaries
- Biosphere reserves
- Nature reserves
- Reserved and protected forests
- Preservation plots
- Reserved forests

Approximately, 4.2 % of the total geographical area of the country has been earmarked for extensive in-situ conservation of habitats and ecosystems. A protected area network of 85 national parks and 448 wildlife sanctuaries has been created. The results of this network

have been significant in restoring viable population of large mammals such as tiger, lion, rhinoceros, crocodiles and elephants.

3. Ex-situ Conservation

Ex-situ conservation of plants and animals preserve/ or protect them away from their natural habitat. This could be in zoological parks and botanical gardens or through the forestry institutions and agricultural research centres. A lot of effort is under way to collect and preserve the genetic material of crops, animal, bird and fish species. This work is being done by institutions such as the National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources, New Delhi, the National Bureau of Animal Genetic Resources, etc. Reintroduction of an animal or plant into the habitat from where it has become extinct is another form of ex situ conservation. For example, the Gangetic gharial has been reintroduced in the rivers of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan where it had become extinct. Seed banks, botanical, horticultural and recreational gardens are important centres for ex situ conservation. Ex-situ conservation measures complement in-situ conservation.

4. Recording Indigenous Knowledge

The lives of local communities are closely interwoven with their environment, and are dependent upon their immediate resources for meeting their needs. These communities have a vast knowledge about local flora and fauna which is very important for biodiversity conservation. Much of this knowledge is orally passed on from generation to generation. Such indigenous knowledge needs to be recorded and preserved before it is lost. Several organizations have recognized this and are working to record the knowledge and preserve it for posterity.

5. Community Participation in Biodiversity Conservation

It is being recognized that no legal provisions can be effective unless local communities are involved in planning, management and monitoring conservation programmes. There are several initiatives to do this, both by government as well as non-governmental organizations. For example, the Joint Forest Management philosophy stresses involvement of village communities in regenerating and protecting degraded forest land in the vicinity of villages. Successful conservation strategies will have to have the confidence and participation of the local communities.

6. International Conservation Strategies

Conserving biodiversity is not an issue confined to any one country or community. It is a crucial global concern. Several international treaties and agreements are in place in the attempt to strengthen international participation and commitment towards conserving biodiversity. Some of these are:

- **The Convention on Biological Diversity:** This was signed during the Earth Summit in 1992. It focuses not only on conserving biodiversity but also on sustainable use of biological resources and equitable sharing of benefits arising from its use.
- **The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES):** This is an international treaty which is designed to protect wild plants and animals affected by international trade. The treaty, in force since 1975, controls the export, import and re-export of endangered and threatened wildlife.

Conservation of Medicinal Plants

In India, 7,000 species of plants found in various ecosystems are used for medicine. During the Buddhist period, plants, vegetables and fruits were in use for treating different ailments. The great works of Ayurveda - Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita and Ashtanga Hridaya - mention about 600 species of plants that were in use. The traditional system of medicine in India dates back to the age of the Rigveda.

Role of Communities in Biodiversity conservation

Protecting the environment is everyone's responsibility. There is an increased awareness among the people towards the conservation of ecologically sensitive areas. There are many conservation movements and initiative in India, which have saved the precious natural resources. Despite all threats, diversity of the species and diversity within the species still continue to survive. Their continued existence is due to farmers and other communities living within the forest. Their cultural practices and knowledge systems have helped nurture biodiversity.

Nature worship is a tribal belief based on the premise that all creations of nature have to be protected. Such beliefs have helped preserve several virgin forests in pristine form called Sacred Groves (the forests of God and Goddesses). These patches of forest or parts of large forests have been left untouched by the local people and any interference with them is banned. The practice dates back to about 3000 to 5000 B.C. Indian society comprises of several cultures, each with its own set of traditional methods of conserving nature and its creations.

Saving biodiversity - Saving life

Following are some conservation actions that we can take up:

- Plant trees. Grow native species of plants (trees, shrubs and climber) where possible, this would attract local wildlife such as birds, butterflies and insects.
- Grow local vegetables in your school garden that are not usually available in the markets. This would allow help conserve them for generations to come.

- Initiate, organize and participate in responsible citizen action against existing or proposed activities that harm or are likely to harm local biodiversity.
- Make a list of different kinds of trees in your campus or locality. For each one find out the names, uses, flowering season, animals and birds that depends on it. Present this information in an interesting way, and put it up by the tree. Many people will stop by to read this information and know more about the tree.
- Curb our greed for products made out of animal parts like skin, fur, ivory, bones, nails, etc., to discourage wildlife traders and poachers, and spare the lives of the remaining animals.
- Adopt vegetarianism which would require fewer animals to be fattened for slaughtering and more plants to be grown for food.
- Avoid using insecticides, pesticides and inorganic fertilizers and try to use natural plant-based substitutes wherever possible. Paper and cloth should replace non-biodegradable plastic and polyester which damage the ecosystem.
- Make children aware of their surroundings and the need for biodiversity.
- Promote bio-farming which is less intensive and environmental-friendly.
- Make use of sustainable technologies like smokeless chulhas, ground water recharging unit, wind energy, solar power, etc.
- Set up 'Community Sanctuaries' for free ranging animals, migratory birds and endemic species. Establish voluntary 'Village Reserves' for plants and animals.
- Assist National level Bodies in recording and preserving rare and endemic species
- Create 'Biodiversity Registers' in communities, schools, villages.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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INTRODUCTION

The environmental policy of a country can be judged from the nature of its legislations governing the same. The pre-world war 11 scenario in India betrays lack of governmental concern for environmental issues as is evident from environmental regulations in force during colonial rule. Scattered provisions were to be found in certain statutes e.g. the Indian Penal Code, the Criminal Procedure Code, the Prisons Act, the Factories Act, The Forest Act, the Fisheries Act etc., but their thrust was peripheral and limited to prevention of air and water pollution, preservation of forests and wild life.

The Indian Penal Code penalized a person who voluntarily fouled the water of any public spring or reservoir whereas the Factories Act required the owners to make effective arrangements for waste disposals. Similarly, the Fisheries Act imposed a penalty for killing of fish by poisoning water. Provision was also made for preserving the fauna and flora as well as wild life. However, the effort was piecemeal and fragmented and its implementation tardy.

While India is greatly concerned about environmental degradation it is faced equally, if not more, serious problem of combating poverty and unemployment. Any country that wishes to raise the standard of living of its people must undertake a massive drive at speedy development. Unless a country can banish poverty and unemployment it may find it difficult to cope up with the problem of environmental degradation because they are interlinked and paradoxical. Poverty cannot be eradicated without the widespread use of science and technology for industrialization. Improvement of environment may be difficult to avoid, unless the latest technological information is made available with required financial support. Industrialization was and is inevitable and with it came problems of industrial waste, air, and water pollution nay the entire eco system. When India concentrated on the need to improve the economic conditions of its masses it had per force to industrialize and it did so on the pattern of industrialization adopted by developed countries. When the advanced countries went to through the process industrialization they too had polluted the environment in a big way.

Environmental degradation caused by one nation is not confined to that nation alone but tends to be global and therefore it is the concern of the entire humanity. When there is depletion of the ozone layer, entire humanity is affected and it must, regardless of geographical boundaries, combat it. The developed and affluent countries have rightly shown concern for the depletion of ozone layer but they have not shown equal concern for the issues concerning the third world countries. Prevention of environmental degradation is a costly proposition and developing countries, however they are keen to avoid it, find it

difficult to do so on account of financial constraints. Even multinational companies which have set up their plants in developing countries have defaulted to provide for the required safety measures ; other wise Bhopal Gas Leak Disaster could have been minimized if not wholly avoided. In the name of protecting intellectual property rights technology transfer is refused thereby increasing the risk factor. In the present day climate of open market economy, developing countries in their zeal to attract foreign collaboration will have to caution themselves against permitting setting up huge industrial establishments without adequate safety precautions since advanced countries have put to beneficial use science and technology they have contributed in no small measure to environmental pollution; therefore, owe it to humanity to help developing countries financially and technologically, to minimize industrial pollution. If the developed countries which have polluted the environment, while going through the process of industrialization and testing of their nuclear and other weaponry , refuse to provide economic as well as technological assistance to developing countries to avoid pollution, developing countries will find it difficult to undertake anti-pollution programmes. The objectives of sustainable development in a spirit of partnership will be defeated if the advanced countries fail to shoulder this responsibility. If they shy away they will be failing in their duty towards humanity.

After the collapse of the erstwhile USSR , the race for military supremacy between the super powers has become irrelevant and economic supremacy has emerged on the centre stage. Military power has thus become complimentary to economic power which the surviving super power may find easier to manipulate to control global development. The changed situation has forced developing nations including India to revise their economic policies. The dramatic shift in economic policies and the new open market economy theory has ushered in a new climate of hope coupled with anxiety. Till recently environmentalists looked upon the market system as one responsible for environmental degradation but this air of confrontation is receding because certain enlightened environmentalists have begun to think that the powerful market forces can be tuned into a power ally. It is believed that with the traditional regulatory approach being replaced, the new approach allows greater flexibility thereby permitting the best private choice which can coincide with social choice and achieve environmental goals at comparatively lower costs. This is a matter which we will leave for the environmentalists and economists to deliberate whether the power of the market can be harnessed to achieve environmental goals at lower cost and thereby achieve the social objective of '*a pollution free environment*'

It is evident that in the past the danger of polluting air, water, and land was not fully realized but in the last three decades humanity has shown a greater concern for avoiding environmental pollution. The development of Environmental Law was, therefore, slow and hence the level consciousness was equally low. But after the war on account of rapid

industrialisation and consequential material gains there was keen desire to lift the standard of living. A balance had however, to be struck down raising the standard of living through development vis-à-vis the consequential cost of possible environmental degradation. The growing conflict between economic and technological advancement on the one hand and safeguarding the quality of environment on the other has made the choice difficult, particularly for the developing countries which have to combat the menace of poverty. The developmental plans of developing countries saw a thrust towards industrialization without a matching concern for prevention of pollution, presumably because of constraints of finance. Chimneys billowing thick black clouds of smoke, motor vehicles emitting smoke and industries discharging effluents in rivers and the sea became common sights which not only had an adverse impact on the flora and fauna and animal life but also affected the health of the living in the vicinity causing serious disorders. With the rise in the population and vehicular traffic, noise pollution has also increased beyond the tolerance levels.

Acts and Treaties

The Environment (Protection) Act was enacted in 1986 with the objective of providing for the protection and improvement of the environment. It empowers the Central Government to establish authorities [under section 3(3)] charged with the mandate of preventing environmental pollution in all its forms and to tackle specific environmental problems that are peculiar to different parts of the country. The Act was last amended in 1991.

Acts

- [No.29 of 1986, \[23/5/1986\] - The Environment \(Protection\) Act, 1986, amended 1991](#)

Rules

- [S.O.844\(E\), \[19/11/1986\] - The Environment \(Protection\) Rules, 1986](#)

India is a party to the various international environmental agreements. The following is the list of such agreements:

- International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling, 1946;
- The Antarctic Treaty, 1959;
- Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, 1980; and
- United Nations Convention on Law of the Sea.
- The Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage, 1969;
- The Fund Convention, 1971; and
- The International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973 and the 1978 Protocol (MARPOL)

- The 'Ramsar Convention', 1971 (on wetlands);
- The World Heritage Convention, 1972;
- The Convention on Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), 1973;
- The Convention on Migratory Species, 1979;
- International Tropical Timber Agreement, 1983;
- FAO International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources, 1983; and
- The Convention on Biological Diversity, 1992.
- Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer, 1985;
- Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, 1987 and its London Amendment, 1990;
- Framework Convention on Climate Change, 1992;
- Kyoto Protocol, 1997 on Reduction of Greenhouse Gases; and
- The Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development, 2002.

ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE OF NON-TIMBER FOREST PRODUCTS (NTFPs) IN INDIA

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INTRODUCTION

Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) are any product or service other than timber that is produced in forests. Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) are also known as “Non-wood Forest Products”, “Minor Forest Products”, “Multi-use Forest Produce”, “Vernacular Forest Products”, and “Special Forest Products”. “Non-timber forest products” (NTFP) here to encompass the wide variety of items derived from the forests other than timber. NTFPs have gained global attention due to their contribution to household livelihood and food security, poverty reduction and biodiversity conservation.

70 per cent of India’s population lives in rural areas, for tribal this is as high as 90 percent. It is well established that most tribal live in forested regions, and their economy is heavily based on gathering from forests. In all about 100 million people living in and around forests derive at least part of their livelihood from collection and marketing of non-timber forest products. These NTFPs provide subsistence and farm inputs, such as fuel, food, medicines, fruits, manure, and fodder. The collection of NTFPs is a source of cash income, especially during the slack seasons. The issue of rights and access to NTFPs and incomes from NTFPs is of great importance to the sustenance and livelihoods for forest dwellers.

The NTFP of economic importance in India can be grouped into the following categories.

NTFP for Food Security: Honey, mushroom, edible fruits and nuts, foliage and rhizomes

NTFP for Wood and Biomass: Useful for fuel, furniture, thatching, forage and manure

NTFP for Medicines and Plant Protection: For human beings, animals and for control of pests and diseases in agricultural crops

NTFP for Aromatics, Dyes and Oilseeds: For medicinal and industrial uses

Various activities related to NTFP are listed below:**Beekeeping:**

In India beekeeping has been mainly forest based. The raw material for production of honey is available free from nature. Bee hives neither demand additional land space nor do they compete with agriculture or animal husbandry for any input.

Shellac:

Shellac is a natural, organic resin that comes from an insect, *Laccifer lacca*. This bug secretes an amber coloured resinous substance that is called "lac". The resin forms cocoon around the insect which serves to incubate the eggs. This cocoon is the raw material from the Shellac and is called "sticklac", because it contains resin, parts of the twig and bug remains. The stick lac is washed and then refined either chemically or by hand, to produce the raw material available for sale.

Rubber Extraction:

The rubber plant, *Havea Brasiliensis* produces sticky white latex that is accumulates and processed to produce natural rubber. A rubber plant grows till 7 year before it can be extracted from.

Beedi (country cigarettes):

Beedi is a local cigarette that is made by rolling tobacco into tendu (*Diospyros melanoxylon*) leaves. It is estimated that about 550 billion pieces of beedi are sold annually in India. Beedi smoking is the most prevalent form of tobacco use among Indians - around 54% of tobacco is used in beedis, 27% is used as chewing tobacco and the balance 19% is used in cigarettes

Katha and cutch:

Katha and cutch are products made from the heartwood of *Acacia catechu* tree. Katha is used as an ingredient of paan (betel) and paan masala chewing confectionery in India. Cutch is used for dying canvas and tanning leather.

Bamboo and rattan products:

The main products manufactured from bamboo are handicraft items such as table mats, trays, lampshades and other household articles. Reed bamboo based traditional industries, such as mat and basket weaving, play a crucial role in the rural economy.

Broom making:

A large quantity of brooms are used in India annually and most are made from grasses (such as *Thysanolaena maxima*), palms (such as *Phoenix acaulis*) and bamboos. Broom making is an important forestry enterprise in several parts of the country.

Essential oils:

Oils originating from plants are used for perfumery and similar purposes. These are derived from grasses, wood, leaves, roots and flowers. There are a number of tree and plant species which yield oil but only a few are commercially exploited for extracting essential oils. These essential oils are major raw materials for soaps and cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, confectionery, aerated water, attars, scented tobacco, agarbattis and incense industries

Resins: There are a number of resins derived from plants of which sal resin, pine resin and turpentine, salai or guggal and balsam resins are commercially important

Promoters of Non Timber Forest Products

The various promoters are:

- Khadi and Village Industries Commission
- NMBA (National Mission on Bamboo Application) www.bambootech.org
- WWF India (Forest Certification) www.wwfindia.org
- Shellac promotion Board
- Flavour and Fragrance Board
- National rubber Board

Market Options

Commercial NTFPs are estimated to generate Rs. 3 billion (US\$ 100million) annually in India. It exports a large number of NTFP to other countries earning foreign exchange revenue to the tune of Rs. 10 billion (US \$ 384 million) annually. India holds monopoly in world trade over some of the NTFPs as Karaya gum (*Sterculia urens*), myrobalans (*Emblica*

officinalis, Terminalia chebula), Sandalwood chips and dust (Santalum album). The export of NTFP has grown by 20-25% over the past few years and during 2006-07, India earned Rs 39.7 billion from export of NTFP and their valued added extracts. There are a number of industries based on NTFPs such as beedi (country cigarette), lacquerware, brooms, essential oils, katha and cutch, tannins, resin and rosin, cane and bamboo furniture, herbal medicines and cosmetics, etc.

Further details of selected NTFP based industries are provided in this section.

Beedi (country cigarettes)

The beedi-making industry has an annual turnover of Rs.190 billion, gives an excise revenue of Rs. 6.5 billion and exports products worth Rs. 8.06 billion. The beedi industry employs a large number of workers directly and many more are indirectly involved, especially in the collection of tendu leaves. The estimates of workers involved in the industry vary from 3 million to 10 million. It is estimated that over 30 million people are indirectly dependent on the beedi industry. The value of tendu leaves harvested for making beedis is estimated at Rs. 15 billion annually. It is estimated that 350,000 tonnes of leaves are harvested annually and 4,700 tonnes are exported. The majority of beedis are rolled by women and child workers.

Katha and cutch

According to an estimate made a few years ago, 3,000 tonnes of katha was produced annually in India, of which 2,000 tonnes was produced in the factory sector, which also produced 4,500 tonnes of cutch.

Shellac

India is an important producer of lac and lac products. The present production of lac is about 15,000 metric tonnes. It is estimated that lac exports in 2001-02 were worth Rs. 652 million.

Bamboo and rattan products

It has been estimated that bamboo based enterprises provide livelihoods to more than 300,000 village people in Kerala state alone. Rattan (cane) extraction and utilisation in

India is, by and large, a cottage industry. It is estimated that there are around 2,000 small to medium sized rattan-based industrial units in India, employing over 200,000 people. The rattan furniture industry produces goods worth Rs. 50 million annually. About 10% of the goods are exported.

Essential oils

These are not only important for the domestic market but have a growing market in other countries as well. While disaggregated export data is not available, the total exports under the category “essential oils and resinoids; perfumery, cosmetic or toilet preparations” were to the tune of Rs. 47.166 billion

Resins

Production of resins and processed products was estimated to be 30,300 tonnes in 1961-62 and had risen to 74,200 tonnes by 1975-76. Production has fallen since then. Production of oleoresin (from *Pinus roxburgii*) was estimated to be 35,000 tonnes in 1985-86 and only 28,000 tonnes in 1995-96. The main reason for the decline in production is unscientific and indiscriminate tapping of trees.

Organizations/Institutes

- A detailed list of various central and state level government agencies as well as many private organizations and companies are listed below:
- Agricultural and Processes Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA)
- Arid Forest Research Institute
- Central Institute for Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (CIMAP)
- Centre for Entrepreneurship Development
- Forest Research Institute
- Fragrance and Flavour Development Centre
- Indian Council Of Forestry Research And Education
- Indian Institute Of Forest Management
- Institute Of Forest Genetics And Tree Breeding
- Institute Of Wood Science And Technology
- Khadi And Village Industries Commission(KVIC)

- Minister Of Micro, Small And Medium Enterprises
- Ministry Of Environment And Forests
- National Bee Board
- National Medicinal Plants Board
- National Mission On Bamboo Application
- Rain Forest Research Institute (RFRI)
- Rubber Board Of India, Ministry Of Commerce And Industry
- Shellac and Forest Products Export Promotion Council
- Tropical Forest Research Institute

Problems of Promoting NTFP for Livelihood

In spite of huge forest resources and abundant production of NTFP, most of these products are not optimally utilised by the local communities. In case of non-edible oilseeds such as Neem, hardly 20% of the total production is collected and utilised while the remaining quantity is wasted. With regard to aromatics, dyes and medicinal plants, there has been total neglect about their utilisation in general, barring a few species, which have been over exploited. It is therefore necessary to understand the problems of NTFP and develop a strategy to optimise their collection and utilisation.

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PROMOTING SPIRITUALITY FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING – ROLE OF MEDIA

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ABSTRACT

Spirituality is like an adventure park waiting to be explored. It is not ideal to consider spirituality as a thing, an object. Spirituality is better thought of as a boundary-less dimension of human experience. Spirituality another way, as something free of institutional structures and hierarchies, about what motivates us at the deepest level, influencing how you think and behave, helping you find a true and useful place in your community, culture and in the world. Spirituality can be thought of as the 'active ingredient' of major world religions. Spirituality cannot be explored using scientific methods because it involves deeply personal, subjective experiences, and in this it differs from the over-riding ambition of science, to be objective. These five dimensions physical, biological, psychological, social and spiritual are seamlessly interconnected. Others, such as the key role of the emotions, will be focused on in more detail in later entries. Joy and wonder, dualism and holism, are the two ways of experiencing time.

INTRODUCTION:

Children's spirituality flows through their capacities for spontaneous joy and wonder. A sense of fascination, of mystery, awe and delight, are facets of adult spirituality too. However, by the teen years, most people have developed a powerfully 'dualistic' understanding of themselves and the world, as if standing outside it. Spirituality, on the other hand, involves a 'holistic' appreciation of a universe in which everyone and everything is connected seamlessly with everyone and everything else. Joy and wonder, dualism and holism, and the two ways of experiencing time are just some of the myriad themes to engage within the spirituality adventure park. With familiarity, the spirituality park may feel increasingly restful, like a beautiful paradise garden. Take advantage of life's literally wonder-full opportunities for excitement, learning and growth. Behind this identity is a deeper identity, what is often called the "true self". This can be thought of as the essence of consciousness. We are each very different people than we were twenty years ago, but still we feel the same sense of "I". This sense of "I-ness" is the same for everyone, and in that respect is something universal that we all share. We will discover a greater inner peace, an inner security that does not depend upon events or circumstances in the world around. As a result we become less self-centered, less needy of the other's approval

or recognition, less needy of collecting possessions and social status, and become happier, healthier and more loving people. In many spiritual teachings this is called "self-liberation". Most spiritual teachings also maintain that when one comes to know the true nature of consciousness, one also comes to know God. If God is the essence of the whole of creation, then God is the essence of every creature, and every person. This is why the search to discover the nature of one's own innermost essence is the search for God.

Spirituality and mystical charm have always drawn people from all over the world to India. As the world becomes increasingly capitalistic and materialist, the quest and urgency for spirituality grows more and more. The traditional Indian way of life has helped in the evolution and growth of Spiritualism. Numerous cultures and religions have thrived and flourished together for ages and resulted into the unique Indian way of life. At different points in the history of our civilization numerous spiritual leaders and saints have delivered the message of peace, brotherhood and co existence that is so very well rooted in our culture. Arts like Yoga and Ayurveda coupled with religion have played an important role in the evolution and existence of spirituality in India. Thus, Indian spirituality is all about showing respect to all living beings-animals trees, rocks and even water and lead a positive and healthy life. The great Indian spiritual personalities and gurus have played an important role in spreading the message of love, care and the need for positive living all over the world.

Art of Living:

Art of living is all about leading a normal and enjoyable life, amidst all the tensions and stresses that inundate living today. It is more of a technique through which we learn to eliminate strains and worries and increase happiness and joy in our life. The concept of art of living has become so popular that it is being adopted at the corporate level also. Organizations are using it to help their executives in dealing with high levels of stress. Sri Sri Ravishankar is the one who pioneered the art of living concept. He analyzed the technique of coping with life. The Mecca of Art of Living Foundation is in the Bangalore city of India.

The Technique of the Art of Living:

The main technique behind the art of living concept is the Sudarshan Kriya. The main reason behind lethargy, inefficiency, ill health and sickness are the toxins, which accumulate in our system at a cellular level. Sudarshan Kriya aims at removing the toxins from the body, by oxygenating and revitalizing these cells. This leads to a balance in the physical, emotional and mental states and brings satisfaction in life.

Role of Mass Media in Promoting Spirituality:

Mass media are tools for the transfer of information, concepts, and ideas to both general and specific audiences. They are important tools in advancing public health goals. Communicating about mental health and physical health through mass media is complex. Sophisticated societies are dependent on mass media to deliver health information. Mass Media function and role is to inform, interpret, educate and entertain. Through Spirituality one can become more patient, calm, hopeful, and joyful which lead to psychological well being. It is possible through mass media in dissemination of information regarding Spirituality. Marshall McLuhan calls media as "extensions of man." G. L. Kreps and B. C. Thornton believe media extend "people's ability to communicate, to speak to others far away, to hear messages, and to see images that would be unavailable without media". The value of mental and physical health news is related to what gets reported and how it gets reported.

The mass media are capable of facilitating short-term, intermediate-term, and long-term effects on audiences. Short-term objectives include exposing audiences to mental and physical health concepts; creating awareness and knowledge; altering outdated or incorrect knowledge; and enhancing audience recall of particular advertisements or public service announcements, promotions, or program names. Intermediate-term objectives include all of the above, as well as changes in attitudes, behaviors, and perceptions of social norms. Finally, long-term objectives incorporate all of the aforementioned tasks, in addition to focused restructuring of perceived social norms, and maintenance of behavior change. Evidence of achieving these three tiers of objectives is useful in evaluating the effectiveness of mass media.

Mass media performs three key functions: educating, shaping public opinion, and advocating for a particular policy or point of view. As education tools, media not only impart knowledge, but can be part of larger efforts, to promote actions having social utility. As advocacy tools, mass media promotes debates about the importance of Spiritual issues, and gaining support for particular viewpoints.

Television:

Television is a powerful medium for appealing to mass audiences-it reaches people regardless of age, sex, income, or educational level, and now around 350 million viewers are watching TV programmes and the number of TV channels have increased up to 400 in India. Spiritually content programmes should be increased and people should be best informed how to lead a hopeful and enjoyable life with peace. Televised messages have the characteristic of high audience involvement. So it is the moral and social responsibility of TV channels to increase the number of programmes on Spirituality so that the viewers will

be helpful to get mental and physical health information thereby they can lead peace and hopeful life.

Radio:

Radio also reaches mass and diverse audiences, now radio listeners are approximately 150 million and the number of radio stations have increased up to 300 in India. The specialization of radio stations by listener age, taste, and even gender permits more selectivity in reaching audience segments. Since placement and production costs are less for radio than for TV, radio is able to convey messages on physical and mental health in greater detail. Thus, radio is sometimes considered to be more efficient. Radio requires somewhat greater audience involvement than television, creating the need for more mental imagery, or what Belch and Belch call "image transfer." Because of this, radio can reinforce complementary messages portrayed in parallel fashion on TV. Radio message campaigns on Spirituality have been effective in developing countries like India.

Internet:

The advent of the World Wide Web and the massive increase in Internet users offers public health personnel enormous opportunities and challenges. It is possible to put virtually anything on-line and disseminate it to any location having Internet access, but the user has little control over quality and accuracy. Internet search engines can direct users to tens of thousands of web sites after the user's introduction of one or more keywords. At present there are approximately 50 million Internet users in India and this number is largest in any developing country in the world. A critical task for Spiritual educators will be to assist people in discriminating among Internet health-information sources. The net sites also permit individuals to submit questions anonymously, receive responses, and be referred to other Internet links on Spirituality and physical and mental health. These items are then archived for use by persons having similar queries. The Internet offers all of the audio and visual strengths of other electronic media, plus interactivity and frequent updates. More information should be posted on the web pages on Spirituality.

Newspapers

Newspapers readership has increased drastically during the last decade. Now in India around 50,000 Newspapers and Magazines are published in different languages. One can miss a television broadcast about Spirituality, lose its entire message, one can read the same and in a more detailed message in a newspaper at one's choice of time and venue. Physical, mental health and Spiritual messages contained in newspapers can reach many people and diverse groups. In addition to educating people about mental health, deliberate efforts need to be directed at educating on Spirituality as it is one of the important functions of mass media.

Magazines.

Magazines have several strengths, including audience selectivity, reproduction quality, prestige, and reader loyalty. Magazines have a relatively long shelf life-they may be saved for weeks or months, and are frequently reread, and passed on to others. Spiritual and quality of life messages, therefore, can receive repeated exposure. Other type of Promotion like, pamphlets, brochures, and posters constitute other print media used to disseminate Spiritual messages. Outdoor promotion includes billboards and signs, placards inside and outside of commercial transportation modes, flying billboards, and skywriting.

Mass Media Effects:

It was proved that Mass Media has a significant influence on the public. The results of mass media for promoting social change, especially in developing country like India, have become important. J. R. Finnegan Jr. and K. Viswanath have identified three effects of media: the knowledge gap, agenda setting, and cultivation of shared public perceptions.

The Knowledge Gap:

Spiritual and Health knowledge is differentially distributed in the population, resulting in knowledge gaps. Unfortunately, mass media are insufficient for distributing information in egalitarian fashion-changes in social structure. Thus, the impact of mass media on audience knowledge gaps is influenced by such factors as the extent to which the content is appealing, the degree to which information channels are accessible and desirable, and the amount of social conflict and diversity there is in a community. Hence, Spiritual and public health media campaigns should be improved and should be more effective when structural factors that impede the distribution of knowledge are addressed.

Agenda Setting:

The selective nature of what members of the media choose for public consumption influences how people think about spiritual and mental health issues, and what they think about them. This theory proved that mass media is successful in influencing what people have to read and what people have to think about. So now it is up to the mass media how they can influence to think about Spirituality and quality of life for the betterment of one's own life.

Cultivation of Perceptions:

Cultivation is the extent to which media exposure, over time, shapes audience perceptions. Long viewers of Television will inevitably adapt, practice and imbibe what they watched. It was proved scientifically through studies.

Conclusion:

Taking this into consideration it was the social responsibility of the media organizations to promote spiritual and mental health programmes as it is one of the important functions of mass media to educate the general public on issues which are important for the well being of mankind. Spirituality plays a vital role in our mental health. Spirituality often becomes more important to people in times of distress, emotional stress, physical and mental illness. To have peaceful, hopeful and joyful life we need to have Spirituality in our lives for the well being of oneself and overall for the society at large.

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HEALTH FOODS

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INTRODUCTION

Health is our most basic human right. It is a state of overall, social, emotional, physical, spiritual and cultural welfare. It is a reflex of our economic status and our environment. Health is therefore one of the most important indicators of sustainable development. It is a well known fact that free radicals are the byproducts of oxygen burning in the body during normal metabolism of food or when the body is exposed to cigarette smoke, radiation, chemical toxins and pollutants. Free radicals are very harmful to cells as they contribute to the aging process and even cause many degenerative diseases. These free radicals also cause oxidative damage to sensitive biological structures such as DNA or cell membranes and can substantially demolish collagen and elastin support system, devastate indispensable enzymes, cause widespread tissue deterioration and abate immune functions. Cumulative damage to cells by free radicals is known to be the major cause of chronic diseases such as Alzheimer's disease, Arteriosclerosis, Cancer, Cataract, coronary heart disease, Stroke and Muscular degeneration among others. A dynamic equilibrium, however, exists in the human body between the factors that promote the oxidation and the Anti-oxidant defense mechanism that inhibits this process. A wide range of plant foods contain many naturally occurring antioxidants, the consumption of which can extensively boost the natural defense system of the human body.

Antioxidants are substances that neutralize the actions of free radicals or act as scavengers of super oxides. They considerably lessen the adverse effect of reactive oxygen species, reactive nitrogen species or both on normal physiological functions and make the bodily defense mechanism strong against oxidative damage. These antioxidants form the largest single group of naturally available protective agents. In food stuffs, the potent antioxidants are generally the flavonoids, Isoflavones, Carotenoids, Zeaxanthin, ascorbic acid, Tocopherol, Lutein, Lycopene, Anthocyanin, polyphenols, Quinines, Coumarins, Terpenoids, Glucosinolates and selenium. Various flavonoids have been shown to prevent oxidation, stimulate the immune system and also reduce an allergic response, prevent formation of carcinogens, impede cancer cell growth and protect against many bacteria and viruses.

A number of phytochemicals, which act as powerful antioxidants are present in fruits, vegetables and other plant species. They are the biologically active substances that bestow color, odor, aroma and flavor to the plants and their parts, and also provide them protection against several diseases. Fruits and vegetables are believed to be protective

foods because they supply sufficient quantities of minerals and Vitamins Which perform not only basic nutritional role in the human body but also help in reducing the risk of several chronic diseases as they contain some Non-nutrient bioactive substances. Therefore, Fruits and Vegetables have been given the status of functional / health foods by nutritionists/ dieticians. Inclusion of Fruits and vegetables in diet can drastically reduce the risk of Cancer and Coronary Heart disease.

The use of plant derived colours in food is believed to have many health benefits. Carotenoids such as beta- carotene, which is responsible for yellow and Orange colour, can be transformed to vitamin A in the body. Flavonoids from the grape Skins and other fruits are believed to have antioxidant activity, as does the yellow pigment Curcumin of turmeric. Similarly, chlorophyll, which provides green colours to plants. Is also believed to have healing properties. Lycopene possess exceptionally high anti-oxidant capacity compared to other carotenoids and may be useful in preventing cancer. Lycopene counteracts the assault of free radicals and spares crucial biological chemicals from damage. In addition to lycopene, the carotenoids lutein and zeaxanthin are added In functional foods, based on their competency to guard against vascular degeneration, Which is considered to be the foremost cause of adult blindness. Today functional foods are getting tangible attention and they represent one of the rapidly growing segments of the world food industry. Thus, beyond meeting nutritional needs, diet may regulate various body functions and may play useful role in preventing many diseases. Some of the healthy foods are:

Fruits

Fruits are a critical part of a healthy lifestyle as they provide essential nutrients and, in some cases, fiber. It is important to add fruits to your diet if you're overweight or obese. This condition can cause undue stress on the heart and fruit-rich diets may help fight that effect. According to the journal *Nutrition*, "Consumption of antioxidant substances contained in fruit could be a useful strategy in the design of hypocaloric diets that, with the weight reduction, could increase the improvement of cardiovascular risk factors related to obesity."

Vegetables

If you're trying to lose weight, vegetables are the perfect addition to your diet. Most vegetables are low in calories and high in nutrition. Think rainbow when choosing vegetables as each color offers different support. Green, leafy vegetables like kale, spinach, collards and even romaine lettuce have very few calories but they offer tons of vitamins. You may be surprised to find "dark green leafy vegetables are an excellent source of fiber, folate and carotenoids. These vegetables also contain vitamins C and K and the minerals iron and calcium," based on information from the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture.

Healthy Starches

Not all starches are not necessarily healthy. Any starch made from white flour is not considered a health food. White flour is bleached – that’s enough to throw up the red flag. Starches to avoid include white bread, white rice and white potatoes. In place of these foods you can add complex carbohydrates, whole grains and sweet potatoes. In general, white lacks color and color means vitamins and nutrients.

Whole Grains

When you think of whole grains do you picture that “wheat” bread in the grocery store? Just because the label says wheat, does not mean it is a health food. Whole grains are the key, so “whole wheat” is what you’re looking for. Other whole grains include whole oats, bulgur, brown rice, whole grain barley, whole rye and buckwheat. Air-popped popcorn is also a great source of whole grains and fiber.

ROLE OF BIODIVERSITY IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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INTRODUCTION:

Biodiversity refers to the variety of life. It is seen in the number of species in an ecosystem or on the entire Earth. Biodiversity gets used as a measure of the health of biological systems, and to see if there is a danger that too many species become extinct. India is one of the 12 mega biodiversity countries in the world. The country is divided into 10 biogeographic regions. The diverse physical features and climatic situations have formed ecological habitats like forests, grasslands, wetlands, coastal and marine ecosystems and desert ecosystems, which harbour and sustain immense biodiversity. Biogeographically, India is situated at the tri-junction of the three realms- Afro - Tropical, Indo - Malayan and Paleo - Arctic realms, and therefore, has characteristic elements from each of them. This assemblage of three distinct realms makes the country rich and unique in biological diversity. The country is also one of the 12 primary centres of origin of cultivated plants and domesticated animals. It is considered to be the homeland of 167 important plant species of cereals, millets, fruits, condiments, vegetables, pulses, fibre crops and oilseeds and 114 breeds of domesticated animals. The term biological diversity was used first by wildlife scientist and conservationist Raymond F. Dasmann in 1968. The term biodiversity first appeared in a publication in 1988 when entomologist E.O.Wilson used it as a title, since then, the term has often been used by biologists, environmentalists, political leaders, and citizens.

Biodiversity is not evenly distributed, rather it varies greatly across the globe as well as within regions. Among other factors, the diversity of all living things depends on temperature, precipitation, altitude, soils, geography and the presence of other species. The study of the spatial distribution of organisms, species, and ecosystems, is the science of biogeography.

Biodiversity is being viewed in the context of sustainable development offers opportunities for poverty eradication, human well-being and the livelihood and socio-cultural integrity of people, and in particular, in developing countries which are rich in biodiversity but are poor and stressed to catch up with the globalization challenge. Biodiversity is crucial to the reduction of poverty, due to the basic goods and ecosystem services it provides. Globally, some 2.6 billion people worldwide draw their livelihoods either partially or fully from agriculture. More than 3 billion people depend on marine and coastal biodiversity, while over 1.6 billion rely on forests and non-timber forest products. Loss of biodiversity poses a significant threat to their livelihoods. Biodiversity must

therefore be protected and sustainably used for achieving poverty reduction and sustainable development. 70% of the world's poor exist in rural areas and depend directly on biological diversity for their livelihoods. As much as 50 to 90 per cent of the total source of livelihoods of poor people is said to be from non-marketed natural goods and ecosystem services. For example, bush meat and other edible wild animals can account for up to 85% of the protein intake of people living in or near forests. In some Asian and African countries, 80% of the population depends on traditional medicines for primary health care. The impact of environmental degradation is mainly severe among the rural population living in poverty. Therefore, access to and sustainable use of biodiversity by the poor are of direct relevance to efforts aimed at poverty reduction. Addressing the biodiversity challenge needs to be at the heart of international cooperation for sustainable development and poverty reduction.

In order to link biodiversity considerations with poverty eradication, the environmental community and the stakeholders who specifically deal with the economic and social dimensions of development need a common framework, a common language. The concept of "ecosystem services" satisfies this need. For both the environmental and development communities, ecosystem services are "the benefits people obtain from ecosystems." Ecosystem services include provisioning services such as food and water; regulating services such as flood and disease control; cultural services such as spiritual, recreational, and cultural benefits; and supporting services such as nutrient cycling that maintain the conditions for life on Earth.

Ecosystem services such as watershed protection, pest control, nutrient cycling and pollination sustain productivity in agricultural ecosystems. When those are impaired or degraded, extreme poverty and hunger are more difficult to address and to overcome. In the long term, the loss of biodiversity that results in a reduction of crop and livestock genetic diversity and in the decreased availability of wild biological resources, threatens food security for the whole population. Since ecosystem functions provide the conditions and drive the processes that sustain the global economy and our very survival, their disruption can have terrible consequence for the world economy.

BIODIVERSITY –SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Biodiversity is the *"living foundation"* for sustainable development. Now, to make biodiversity sustainable is one thing; and to practice sustainable use of biodiversity is another. Making biodiversity sustainable is the process; and sustainable use of biodiversity is the technique. To us important is that, we shall have to understand the process of making biodiversity sustainable, and the technique to be adopted for its use at the same time.

Sustainable use of biodiversity is measured under the headings -- 'Direct-use value', 'Indirect-use value' and 'Non-use value'. Direct-use value includes food, medicine,

biological control, industrial materials, recreational harvesting and ecotourism. Indirect-use value deals with biodiversity and ecosystem functions for maintenance of soundness of environment as a whole. Non-use value provides options value, bequest value, existence value and intrinsic value. All use-values of biodiversity are possible to be sustainable when conservation of biodiversity is made sustainable. Truly sustainable development requires entities to redefine their policies on land use, food, water, energy, employment, development, conservation, economics and trade. Protection and sustainable use of biodiversity requires the participation of ministries responsible for such areas as agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, tourism, trade and finance.

CHALLENGES

Environmental issues are also a major global issue. Humans depend on a sustainable and healthy environment, and yet we have damaged the environment in numerous ways. Climate change is also exacerbating biodiversity loss. Biodiversity is critical for the resilience of ecosystems and thus important for the provision of often-irreplaceable ecosystem services, encompassing, inter alia, food, water and cultural services. While current losses in biodiversity are mostly caused by habitat destruction, climate change could soon become an even bigger threat to the survival of species and is expected to accelerate the overall trend in biodiversity loss. Climate change also puts pressure on natural resources that are essential for sustaining human civilization. In the past, resource scarcity was often presented as a critical challenge, but for much of the twentieth century, resource prices actually fell. The combination of rapid economic expansion, continued population growth and a changing climate raises the spectre of resource scarcities

Remedies to prevent Biodiversity

Learn all that you can about biodiversity and food issues. Learn about where your food comes from, including about how food is grown and raised around the world. Understanding biodiversity is important to understand how humans should live while respecting the Earth's finite resources.

Be aware when shopping-Be informed in your choices when you go shopping. You can buy things that help to protect biodiversity. Individual choices on what you eat and buy are important.

- Whenever possible, choose healthy, local and sustainably produced foods.
- Seek food that have little packaging.

There are many ways that you can make a direct difference as an individual. Here are a few ideas on how you can act to protect biodiversity:

- Plant a tree. Make sure it is a local tree species and look after it.

- Keep nearby forests, woodlots, bush and riversides clean.
- Use, reuse or repair things until they are completely worn out.
- Do not use, eat or buy endangered species. Ask your family, friends, community members to avoid buying or using endangered species.
- Avoid using pesticides in family and community gardens.
- Use composting at home. The compost can be added to the family garden or the community garden and
- Find out where and how your food is grown. Encourage your family to support local or sustainable farming.

CLIMATE CHANGE

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INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of human civilization, mankind has lived in a competitive relationship with nature. His relentless pursuit of progress, comfort and security has resulted in increased stress on environment, particularly since the industrial revolution. Consequently, the life sustaining environment has been forced to transform more rapidly than ever before. Human tendency to exert a negative influence on ecology has resulted into rapid increase in the greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, large scale deforestation, loss of biodiversity, severe land degradation and environmental pollution.

The effects of these problems are global, so we call them as global environmental problems. The overall impact of these problems has been observed as – climate change, depletion of ozone, a rise in sea level, changes in agricultural output and loss of biodiversity, ultimately leading to an ecological crisis capable of affecting the entire life and life support systems existing on our planet, Earth.



Climate is inherently variable. Climate differs from place to place. It varies with time. As we go back through millions and millions of years that constitute geologic time, the climate record becomes extremely fragmented and unreliable. Climate change is a major issue for indigenous peoples around the world so it is no coincidence that the special theme for the seventh session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues is “*Climate change, bio-cultural diversity and livelihoods: the stewardship role of indigenous peoples and new challenges*”.

Climate change is considered to be a critical global challenge and recent events have demonstrated the world’s growing vulnerability to climate change. The impacts of climate change range from affecting agriculture to further endangering food security, to rising sea-levels and the accelerated erosion of coastal zones, increasing intensity of natural disasters, species extinction and the spread of vector-borne diseases. **Climate change is about the growth of** greenhouse gas emissions due to the burning of fossil fuels, resulting mainly from industrial activities and motor transportation, hence there is a build up of the carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere. The carbon dioxide build up is made worse by the

increasing loss of forests, which act as “carbon sinks” that absorb gases and prevent its release into the atmosphere. Further, the increase of carbon dioxide and other gases in the atmosphere also enhances the “Greenhouse Effect” (in which more heat is generated), thus leading to temperatures rising. In many instances, high level meetings and various reports on climate change make only scarce mention of indigenous peoples, and then only in certain regions and as helpless victims of changes beyond their control. Hence, there is a need to shift the focus so that indigenous peoples are primary actors within global climate change monitoring, adaptation and innovation.

In the tropical rainforests of Asia, temperatures are expected to rise 2-8 degree Celcius and further climatic variation will include decrease in rainfall, crop failures and forest fires. Tropical rainforests are the haven for biodiversity, as well as indigenous peoples’ cultural diversity and forest fires will threaten this heritage of biodiversity. People in low-lying areas of Bangladesh could be displaced by a one-meter rise in sea levels. Such a rise could also threaten the coastal zones of Japan and China. The impact will mean that salt water could intrude on inland rivers, threatening some supplies of fresh water. In the high altitude regions of the Himalayans, there are glacial melts which effect hundreds of millions of rural dwellers who depend on the seasonal flow of water; there might be more water in the short term, but less in the long run as glaciers and snow cover shrink. The warming of the high altitude regions are likely to mean that population growth, settlement expansion and encroachment are likely to become a major management challenge and these external influences are likely to have an impact on indigenous peoples and their lands. The poor, many of whom are indigenous peoples, are highly vulnerable to climate change in urban areas because of their limited access to profitable livelihood opportunities and limited access to areas that are fit for safe and healthy habitation. Consequently, the poor sector will be exposed to more risks from floods and other climate related hazards in areas where they are forced to live.

Adaptation to climate change is a necessary strategy to complement climate change mitigation effects. Adaptation often produces benefits as well as forming a basis for coping with future climate change. However, experience demonstrates that there are constraints to achieving the full measure of potential adaptation. There are many instances of, maladaptation, such as promoting development in risk-prone locations, which can occur due to decisions based on short-term considerations. The ability of human systems to adapt to and cope with climate change depends on factors such as wealth, technology, education, information, skills, infrastructure, access to resources and management capabilities.

THEME:
SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS -
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

WELFARE SCHEMES FOR THE SCHEDULED CASTES

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INTRODUCTION

Various welfare schemes for the Scheduled Castes have been implemented by the Central and State Governments. Some of the schemes are fully financed by the Central Government, while some schemes are implemented and financed by State Governments. Training and coaching centers have been established for the training of Scheduled Caste persons in order to achieve success in getting services. Post-Matric scholarship and stipends are being provided to Scheduled Caste students. Provisions have been made for free supply of books, educational equipment and stationery. Ashram Schools have been set up for them. Grants have also been provided for construction of schools and hostel buildings. Since the beginning of planning era, Efforts have been made towards the welfare of backward classes through Five Year Plans. Various schemes have been included in plans for the welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The outlays for the development of this sector were supposed to be supplementary. It was expected that the benefits of normal developmental programmes would be received by the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. However, over a period, it was realised that benefits accruing from these general programmes to SCs and STs were negligible. Therefore, Tribal Sub-plans were introduced in the Fifth plans and Special Component Plans were introduced in the Sixth Plan for the development of STs and SCs respectively.

By end of the Fifth plan it was realised that this oppressed section of the society should be made to participate in the developmental process on equal terms and receive a reasonable share of fruits of general economic development. To achieve this objective the strategy of Special Component Plan (SCP) was devolved during the sixth plan with emphasis on family and beneficiary oriented developmental schemes. The SCP was to be financed from four sources:

- (i) State plans,
- (ii) Central sector and centrally sponsored schemes

(iii) Special central assistance and

(iv) Institutional finance.

The SCP envisaged for identification of schemes in the general sectors of development for the benefits of SCs. It also included quantification of funds from all programmes under each sector and determination of specific targets in terms of number of families to be benefited from these programmes. The effort has been to enable the Scheduled Castes to cross the poverty line.

Special Central assistance was envisaged in addition to the states' SCPs and it was not tied to specific schemes. It was meant for the state sponsored efforts for the development of SCs. The only condition laid down was that this fund had to be used by the States only for income-generating developmental schemes. In the Sixth Plan the Central Ministries were directed to earmark funds from Ministries' plans in proportion to the population of the target groups. Scheduled Castes Development Corporations have been constituted in 18 States and 3 UTs. The main functions of these corporations have been to mobilise institutional credit for economic development of Scheduled Caste entrepreneurs. They are supposed to act as catalysts, promoters and guarantors of entrepreneurship. These corporations have acted as partners along with banks in financing SC entrepreneurs. Loan, subsidy and margin money are to be routed through one window, preferably the bank.

The margin money loan program had not succeeded in generating institutional finance to the tune of required magnitude. This was due to operational problems inherent in the scheme. Therefore, a new pattern of assistance to SC families through SCDCs was adopted during Seventh Plan. The families below poverty line were covered at three levels in the following order of priority: very poor, very poor and poor families. The programme aims to achieve this objective by integrating self-employment and wage-employment approaches. From the beginning, special emphasis has been given on the coverage of SC and ST families in the Integrated Rural Development programme. The guidelines provided that at least 20 % of families selected for assistance should belong to SCs/STs. Also that- at least 20% of subsidies, loans etc. should go to SC/ST beneficiaries.

Ten per cent of the resources were earmarked for direct and exclusive benefit of SCs and STs in the National Rural Employment Programme. In Rural Landless Employment

Guarantee Programme provision was made for construction of micro habitats and housing units for SC, STs and freed bonded labourers under .Indira Awas Yojana. Steps have also been taken for the economic development of Scheduled Castes.

The Scheduled Castes along with Scheduled Tribes are given prior opportunity in various rural development schemes such as National Rural Employment Programme, Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme, Integrated Rural Development programme (I.R.D.P) etc. Assistance is given to them for setting up poultry and dairy- units. Government is doing every effort to improve their housing condition. Various housing schemes are being implemented by both State and Central Governments. Top priority is being given for the supply of drinking water. The welfare of Scheduled Castes and Tribes is given special attention by both Central and State Governments. Special programmes for their welfare have been undertaken in the successive five years plans. Programmes for their welfare are conceived of as' being supplemented to general developmental programmes in different sectors. Special provisions have been made for them so as to generate larger support from general schemes of development.

Scheduled caste people are no doubt getting reservation benefits in Government services and the public sector. There is gradual improvement in their economic condition and social status. Looking at the balance sheet of socio-economic achievements relating to the upliftment of Scheduled Castes and Tribes, it can be said that the benefits of socio – economic progress have not fully reached these communities. The Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Tribes says that the reason for the socio-economic benefits not reaching Scheduled caste people and Advises, is not far to seek. Recalling his earlier report, he refers to the vast and distressing gap that exists between what we profess and what we practise Sympathy for these unfortunate communities in the minds of the national leaders, does not percolate in the same intensity and sincerity to leadership at the lower levels where there is a general absence of disciplined party followers.

On the other hand, those in the administration at various levels who are responsible for the implementation of welfare program and schemes, do not work with due sense of commitment.

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES/PROGRAMS FOR TRIBAL WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

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ABSTRACT:

The Ministry of Tribal affairs looks around about the empowerment of tribal women also. The Ministry was set up in 1999 after the bifurcation of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment with the objective of providing more focused approach on the integrated socio-economic development of the Scheduled Tribes (STs), the most underprivileged of the Indian Society, in a coordinated and planned manner. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs is the nodal Ministry for overall policy, planning and coordination of programmes for development of ST's. There are so many Programs and Schemes initiated by Indian government for tribal women empowerment. The programmes and schemes of the Ministry are intended to support and supplement, through financial assistance, the efforts primarily of other Central Ministries, the State Governments and partly of voluntary organizations, and to fill critical gaps in institutions and programmes taking into account the situation of STs.

The primary responsibility for promoting the interests of Scheduled Tribes rests with all the Central Ministries. The Ministry supplements their efforts by way of various developmental interventions in critical sectors through specially tailored schemes. These, comprising schemes for economic, educational and social development and through institution building are administered by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs and implemented mainly through the State Government/ Union Territory Administrations. There are three on-going schemes with the Ministry, which are open for participation of Voluntary Organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations.

- Grant-in-aid to Voluntary Organizations working for welfare of Scheduled Tribes (GVWST).
- Educational Complex in low literacy pockets for the development of women in tribal areas (ECLP).
- Vocational Training Centres (VTC).

In addition to above mentioned three schemes the Ministry has an exclusive on-going scheme for Voluntary Organizations/Non-Governmental Organizations for development of Primitive Tribal Groups (PTG).

Key words: Ministry of Tribal affairs, Empowerment for Tribal Women.

INTRODUCTION

In the process of poverty eradication and reducing gender discrimination, the governments have been implementing various schemes and programmes providing ways and means towards women development and empowerment. Self Help Group movement is one among such programmes which has been proved successful in fulfilling its objectives. However, it is felt that the other schemes and programmes do have their prominent part in the process of women development and empowerment and which are being successfully implemented. In this regard the schemes and programmes intended for women development are briefed here under. After attaining independence, the Government of India, initially decided to pave a path to bring about social change based on three major areas, viz., constitutional and legal reforms, planned development based on mixed economy and state support to social welfare activities. All these three policies are expected to create a democratic, just and prosperous society. All these three steps have their impact on the status of women.

The constitution of India has given special attention to the needs of women to enable them to exercise their rights on equal footing with men and participate in national development. It aims at creation of an entirely new social order where, all citizens are given equal opportunities for growth and development and that no discrimination takes place on the basis of race, religion, caste, sex, etc., The constitution has given more than 20 articles on the redressed and upliftment of underprivileged with policies on positive discrimination and affirmative action with reference to S.T. Article 14 confers equal rights and opportunities to all

- Article 15 prohibits discrimination against any citizen on the grounds of sex, religion, race, caste etc;
- Article 15 (4) States to make special provisions for advancement of any socially educationally backward classes;
- Article 16 (4) empowers the state to make provisions for reservation in appointments or posts in favour of any backward class of citizens, which in the opinion of state, is not adequately represented.
- Article 46 state to promote with special cares the educational and economic interests of the weaker section, especially the ST and protects the social injustice and all form of exploitation.
- Article 275 grant-in aid for promoting the welfare of ST and raising the level of administration.

- Article 330 - Seats shall be reserved in the House of the People for -Article 332 Reservation of seats for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Legislative Assemblies of the States 332,335 stipulates the claims that the members of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes shall be taken into consideration, consistently with the maintenance of efficiency of administration, in the making of appointments to services and posts in connection with the affairs of the Union or of a State.
- Article 244(1) tribal welfare communities to be setup for the welfare of the tribes.
- Article 22(2) 73rd and 74th amendments - to ensure effective participation of tribal in the process of planning and decision making.
- Extension to scheduled Areas Act 1996. Amendments of Constitution are extended to the Scheduled Areas through Panchayats.

These constitutional provisions of the Government of India helped in the development of the tribes and their education.

SCHEMES FOR TRIBAL WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

These schemes are classified into Welfare programmes, developmental programmes and welfare cum developmental programmes. Some developmental programmes are also sponsored by the Central Government.

- ✓ Equity support to NSTFDC/STFDC
- ✓ DBT Scheme for Post Matric Scholarship, TOP Class Education, Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship
- ✓ R-M : Research Training: Operational Guidelines for the scheme "Grants-in-Aid to TRIs"
- ✓ R-M : Scheme of Centres of Excellence.
- ✓ CP-R: Guidelines for the Scheme "Institutional Support for Development and Marketing of Tribal Product"
- ✓ CP-R : Guidelines for the Scheme MSP to MFP
- ✓ NGO : Vocational Training Centres in Tribal Areas
- ✓ NGO: Schemes of Strengthening education among Scheduled Tribes Girls in a low literacy Districts

- ✓ NGO: Scheme of Development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PTGs)
- ✓ NGO: Scheme of Grant in Aid to Voluntary Organizations working for welfare of STs
- ✓ SG : Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS)
- ✓ SG: Grants under Article 275 (1) of the Constitution of India
- ✓ SG: Special Central Assistance to Tribal Sub Plan (SCA to TSP)
- ✓ EDU : Establishment of Ashram Schools in Tribal Sub-Plan Areas
- ✓ EDU - PRE-MATRIC SCHOLARSHIP (Class IX and X) w.e.f. 01-07-2012 : { NEW }
- ✓ EDU: Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Hostels for ST boys and ST Girls
- ✓ EDU: Post Matric Scholarship (PMS) for ST students
- ✓ EDU: Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship for ST Students
- ✓ EDU: National Overseas Scholarships for Scheduled Tribe Students
- ✓ EDU: Vocational Training Centres in Tribal Areas
- ✓ EDU: Upgradation of Merit of ST Students
- ✓ EDU: Top Class Education for ST Students
- ✓ Schemes in Short

To sum up, planned development has been considered to be the most effective way of solving the numerous problems comes in the way of eradicating poverty, reducing imbalances and preventing discriminations among rural poor women folk. In this process various policies and programmes future for empowerment of women have been implemented for which special budget allocations are made in Five Year Plans. Besides, various schemes are being implemented to uplift socio-economic status of rural poor women and paving a path for their empowerment. Thus the government has been making sincere efforts to empower women in socio-economic and politico-cultural aspects, so that a welfare state and a prosperous nation can be built. Thus, the governmental policies and programmes implemented for empowerment of women have been examined to fulfil for empowering tribal women.

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IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON TRIBAL COMMUNITIES IN INDIA

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Globalization:

Globalization means to open the Trade and Economy for the international players. In other words, every manufacturer or producer of goods can compete for sale of their products without restrictions or without any imposed control. Globalisation should not be considered in isolation, but should be considered in totality with liberalisation of the industrial policy towards lifting of trade control and restrictions, influence of trade block and simultaneous privatisation. Global market treats the world as a single market. With the advent of information technology and its strategic application, the world is focussed as a global village and all traders are therefore globalised.

Globalization in literal sense is a process of transformation of regional or local phenomena into global ones. Globalization is making a considerable impact on all aspect of human life directly or indirectly in everywhere in the world and it is multidimensional. All the economic, technological, socio-cultural, and political forces act combine in the process of transformation of lifestyle of any community in everywhere and at every level. Globalization process is also called modernization which include development of science and technology and, communication by which all the places are interconnected and people become more migratory.

Globalisation in India:

In the 1990s due to change in world economic order and due to heavy pressures from rich countries like USA, Japan, European countries dominating the WTO and IMF and World Bank engaged in development financing activities, the developing and the poor countries all over the world were forced to open their trade and market and allow foreigners to share their major chunk of a business. Thus, India first started the process of globalisation and liberalisation in 1991 under the leadership of the then Prime Minister Shri. P.V. Narasimharao with the help of Dr. Manmohan Singh, the then Union Finance Minister.

Impact of Globalization on Tribal Life

In India the fruit of globalization process did not reached equally in all the segment of the society specially the marginal classes the tribal community. Above all globalization as well as the development programs can't transform the pattern and standard of life on a large scale in Tribal's life.

The term tribe is more functional in nature in India. There was a purpose to declare or recognize some societies as tribal societies through constitutional Act of the country. Thus when we talk of tribe we talk of the Scheduled Tribes, the social groups recognized or listed in the Schedule of the Constitution of India. Therefore, by definition, the Scheduled tribes are those social groups who are “such tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 to be Scheduled Tribes for the purposes of this constitution”. This delineation shows that there is no characteristic definition regarding tribal groups in India in our constitution. The recognition is done on purpose or functional aspects only. But it is generally accepted that in selecting the tribal people the following characters are taken some sort of priority: indications of primitive traits, distinctive culture, geographical isolation, shyness of contact with the community at large, and backwardness. The criteria are not spelt out in the Constitution but have become well established. It subsumes the definitions contained in 1931 Census, the reports of first Backward Classes Commission 1955, the Advisory Committee (Kalelkar), on Revision of SC/ST lists (Lokur Committee), 1965 and the Joint Committee of Parliament on the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes orders (Amendment) Bill 1967 and (Chanda Committee), 1969.

The tribal community could not share the fruit of development programs equally like other caste people. It also increases discrimination among the rural and urban people, between have and have not family. Poor people become poorer. The tribal are exploited more. In the constitution there is some provision for education and for the development of their socio-economic condition. In spite of this provision they are victimized by the industrialization and modernization process. Pattern and method of ownership have changed. Land and forest in some places which are the habitat of most of the tribe and also the source of income have exploited for industrialization and urbanization processes for which they have to lose tenancy. Family structure is also changed.

Since the onset of the current era of economic liberalization, privatization and globalization (LPG), the areas inhabited by indigenous peoples have been subjected to incessant social unrests and protests. Subsistence livelihood of these people is now under threat thanks to the free flow of global capital to these regions which is intent on exploring and exploiting their mineral resources. Globalization has led to a new trend of homogenization in development process all over the globe. In the name of modernizing backward countries and regions and civilizing the ‘less civilized’ indigenous people in these areas, the current form of LPG development is creating wealth for the modernizing elites at the cost of the livelihood and security of the indigenous peoples in these areas. The elites believe that investment by multinational companies (MNCs) in mineral-based industries in the backward tribal regions that are rich in mineral resources will increase export earnings and accelerate economic growth, which in turn will develop basic infrastructure and bring

about the progressive socioeconomic transformation of the indigenous population. In the name of modernization and development, they have invited foreign capital and technology to explore and exploit the unexploited mineral and other natural resources of the so-called backward areas in India which are inhabited largely by tribal people and poor peasants. The mainstream LPG development model promotes mega development projects in the developing countries to accelerate the process of development by increasing economic growth expressed in terms of gross national product (GNP). In the name of development it is causing the massive displacement of human populations and the decimation of the sustainable subsistence agriculture of the peoples who have traditionally been dependent upon their local ecosystems for their survival. In India alone, between 1951 and 1990 around 21.3 million persons were displaced by development projects. Among this number 8.54 million (40 per cent) were tribal or indigenous people and only 2.12 million (24.8 per cent) were resettled (Government of India, 2002: 458). According to the latest estimates, the total number of people displaced during the last 60 years has reached almost 60 million (Mathur, 2008: 3). In recent years this displacement has become more intensified due to the conditions created by globalization and economic liberalization, which favour the growth of many mineral based industries set up by the MNCs and large Indian corporate houses (ICHs) in the mineral rich tribal regions of the country.

Impact on the indigenous culture of tribal society:

It also has tremendous impact on culture specially the indigenous culture of tribal society. The tribal, the original settler are mostly live in forest, hills and other naturally isolated regions which are rich in mineral resources. Their lifestyles are conditioned by ecological setting they live. India is a land of diverse ethnic group (having 08.6% tribal population to total population in 2011) with diverse language, economy and socio-cultural system. Globalization also has negative impact as inequality, poverty, deprivation of land and forest area. The quality of life means the wellbeing of any society or individual. It also includes physical, socio, and cultural sphere of life of tribal people.

What should be done?

Exclusion of tribal people operates at the level of individual, group, institution, locality, and region and so on. It is both cultural and material, and is hierarchical in terms of needs and intensity. Keeping that discourse in mind, it is important to point out that in India's development efforts there has been no coherent appreciation of social exclusion of tribal people, and no integrated approach to combat exclusion, despite the fact that political rhetoric and policy documents take into account scheduled tribes. Because exclusion is embedded in the way society functions, any approach to overcome it calls for understanding the role of societal processes and institutional structures in creating deprivation and exclusion. This assumes greater significance with the arrival of

globalization. With globalization only part of a larger development project, its success or failure depends on how different nations draw up globalization road maps in the context of the larger development process. India's position in this record so far has been miserable and ruinous.

The debate over positive discrimination in India is spiteful and is increasingly finding expression in violence as we can witness in many part of the country. On the one hand the policy is defended as ethically correct as it is meant to compensate for centuries of injustice perpetrated against large sections of people on account of their social origin. But a democracy which is essentially a social contraption is neither dictated by logic nor by ethics. At the root of democratic success is social engineering which is affected through political bargaining. In India the process is on and only the future would tell whether its experiments were in the right direction or not. Social categories are neither static nor monolithic. But in India the hierarchical stratifications have by and large survived for centuries and they continue to be politically relevant. In the given situation the policy of reservation seems to continue for an indefinite period, at least for the tribal. But this is the easiest thing that the state could think of. The real challenge for the state should be to make the disadvantaged groups competitive through raising their standards so as to let them be on par with the traditionally successful upper classes. That is cost intensive and for that there has to be a shift in the dynamics of power. The disadvantage would have to come to the fore of politics. This is a negative trend among the tribal groups, who in turn are in the verge of losing its unique identity, and thus problems of identity crisis occur. One has to be clear about the fact that no one can deny changes in society. But penetration by an alien culture that does not have basic linkage to the core of people's life ways is not a welcome change at all. Social scientists have mentioned that social and cultural disintegration through such forces has made tribal people more vulnerable to severe exploitation throughout the country.

There is a need to raise awareness of exclusion, leading to mobilization and group action. Disadvantages arising out of exclusion in India take multiple forms economic, educational, social, political and cultural and are all deeply rooted in traditional society. Because combating social exclusion is meant to bring about social integration a value-loaded term in the context of continuing caste, communal, ideological and political conflicts. Because the mandate of the Indian Constitution is to usher in a secular, democratic, pluralist and egalitarian society, even though the caste-based social hierarchy still stifles this mandate, the answers to these questions would entail engagement with many related social problems. Central to such engagement is the need to enrich India's legislative and parliamentary practices, processes and discourses, thus separating religion from politics and governance, expanding the space for effective participation by those at the margins of society and strengthening "social justice" in order to enable the full and healthy growth of

democracy. Because globalization, per se, is not development and has many socially harmful elements, globalization itself needs to be brought within the ambit of development; in which case the emphasis should be on development discourse, treating development as freedom as Amartya Sen has done. Such a debate has not yet taken place. With globalization only part of a larger development project, its success or failure depends on how different nations draw up globalization road maps in the context of the larger development process. India's record on this so far has been dismal and disastrous.

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SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

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INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the world's fastest growing industries and is a major source of income for many countries. Being a people-oriented industry, tourism also provides many jobs which have helped revitalise local economies. However, like other forms of development, tourism can also cause its share of problems, such as social dislocation, loss of cultural heritage, economic dependence and ecological degradation. Learning about the impacts of tourism has led many people to seek more responsible holidays. These include various forms of alternative or sustainable tourism such as: 'nature-based tourism', 'ecotourism' and 'cultural tourism'. Sustainable tourism is becoming so popular that some say that what we presently call 'alternative' will be the 'mainstream' in a decade. All tourism activities of whatever motivation – holidays, business travel, conferences, adventure travel and ecotourism – need to be sustainable. Sustainable tourism is defined as

“tourism that respects both local people and the traveller, cultural heritage and the environment”. It seeks to provide people with an exciting and educational holiday that is also of benefit to the people of the host country.



Sustainable tourism is a kind of approach to tourism meant to make the development of tourism ecologically supportable in the long term. The very importance of sustainable

tourism lies in its motives to conserve the resources and increase the value of local culture and tradition. Sustainable tourism is a responsible tourism intending to generate employment and income along with alleviating any deeper impact on environment and local culture. Sustainable tourism development requires the informed participation of all relevant stakeholders, as well as strong political leadership to ensure wide participation and consensus building. Achieving sustainable tourism is a continuous process and it requires constant monitoring of impacts, introducing the necessary preventive and/or corrective measures whenever necessary. Sustainable tourism should also maintain a high level of tourist satisfaction and ensure a meaningful experience to the tourists, raising their awareness about sustainability issues and promoting sustainable tourism practices amongst them. Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social

and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities.

Sustainable tourism development requires the informed participation of all relevant stakeholders, as well as strong political leadership to ensure wide participation and consensus building. Achieving sustainable tourism is a continuous process and it requires constant monitoring of impacts, introducing the necessary preventive and/or corrective measures whenever necessary.

Sustainable tourism should also maintain a high level of tourist satisfaction and ensure a meaningful experience to the tourists, raising their awareness about sustainability issues and promoting sustainable tourism practices amongst them. Tourism is one of the world's fastest growing industries and an important source of foreign exchange and employment for many developing countries. Sustainable tourism was designed not to stop tourism but to manage it in the interests of all three parties involved - the host habitats and communities, the tourists and the industry itself. It seeks a balance between development and conservation. It seeks to find the best form of tourism for an area taking into account its ecology and its culture. It may mean limits to growth or in some cases no growth at all. The precautionary principle is important here.

Sustainable tourism seeks not just to plan for tourism, but to integrate tourism into a balanced relationship with broader economic development. That is the way in which sustainable tourism fulfils its requirement to think holistically, and one of its approaches to responsibility in business, the triple bottom line. In many rural areas the watchword is that tourism should be a tool for rural conservation, service retention and diverse development - not just a business for its own sake. In many urban areas, tourism can also work with heritage conservation by using redundant historic buildings for tourism purposes, by injecting tourism expenditures into areas needing urban regeneration, and by bringing jobs and re-training to areas with unemployment / social problems.

SPIRITUALITY AND WELLBEING – A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

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Introduction:

Spirituality is more concerned with direct experience of latent higher consciousness within one's self, i.e. the internal space, whereas religion is an institutionalized set of beliefs, practices, and guidelines that an individual adopts and follows. Many spiritual movements arose as a rebellion against dominant religions of their times, for instance Buddhism and Jainism from Hinduism, Sufism as a critique against orthodox Islam. Historically, every religion has had its basis in direct spiritual experience of a spiritual master and only later after his teachings were consolidated and formulated in the form of a doctrine that people started following.

Ancient Indian psychology and recent revival by Sri Aurobindo:

Ancient Indian thought is a storehouse of rich psychological insights elucidating explicit and subtle nuances of processes and constructs such as mental health and illness, cognition, emotion, attention, motivation, perception, self and personality, psychopathology and its treatment. Ancient Indian physician and scholar Charaka seems to have emphasized positive mental health when he articulated that the task of medicine is not simply to strive for absence of disease but to enable an individual to learn about and lead ideal life. Upanishads distinguished between the self as an ultimate entity and self as empirical ego. Whereas the ego engages itself in worldly affairs and experiences pleasure as well as pain, the 'atman' or ultimate entity is devoid of pain or pleasure, it is an onlooker devoid of senses, surpassing time, space, and causality and it is the true self and ultimate reality. This reality cannot be perceived or known by our mind as it is different from phenomenal reality and it can only be realized through meditation. In order to terminate suffering, one must awaken the higher self and let it conquer the lower one. Twentieth-century Indian philosopher and spiritualist Sri Aurobindo based on his experiences and thorough study of ancient Indian philosophy constructed an evolutionary map of consciousness. He believed that consciousness is the fundamental thing in the universe and it manifests itself as matter, different objects and beings. It is erroneous to identify consciousness with mind as there are ranges of consciousness above and below the human range, of which the normal human being is naove. The purpose of life and over several lifetimes is to lift this veil of ignorance and pervade the inner recesses of spiritual kingdoms after which our external being, mind or ego will occur to us as small and superficial. The path of spiritual attainment according to Sri Aurobindo need not be a renunciation of the world and a leap into Samadhi but it should be a patient transit beyond

mind into truth-consciousness where the infinite can be known, felt, seen, and experienced to its fullest. Sri Aurobindo believed that traditional method of spiritual attainment, where the individual cut himself from the world, was flawed as the individual lost the insights of higher consciousness as soon as he came back to ordinary worldly consciousness. True liberation is not a flight from the material world into a spiritual world but is possible only by a unification of two ends of existence, the spiritual summit and the material base.

Spirituality and Well -Being:

Since ancient times it is relentlessly believed that spiritual engagements further a sense of well-being. Researches in the contemporary psychology though in their nascent state have reached a similar conclusion. It has been found that life satisfaction correlates positively with mystical experiences and people who have had spiritual experiences report tremendous positive feelings as compared to others. Although religious and nonreligious people tend to experience equal amounts of stress, it has been observed that religion may help people deal better with negative life events and their attendant stress. Individuals with imperious religious faith report higher levels of satisfaction, greater personal happiness, and fewer negative consequences of traumatic life events. People engaging in spiritual pursuits report being generally happy, cheerful, at peace most of the time, rarely depressed, have excellent physical health, and are satisfied with the meaning and purpose they find in their lives. In recent past, several neuro cognitive researches have been attempted to comprehend the impact of spiritual activities on human brain. It has been found that prefrontal lobes of monks are lit even when they are not meditating and this area is responsible for positive emotions, suggesting that meditation leads to a metamorphosis of brain structure to emit positive emotions. The EEG records indicate that meditation can even tame amygdala enabling the individual to be less shocked, flustered, or angry. Transcendental meditation promotes increasing degrees of orderliness, integration, and coherence in the brain leading to a unique style of brain functioning. While a relative excitement is continuously present in the brains of non-enlightened subjects, the enlightened people maintain a low level of excitation, which has a pervasive calming effect on the mind. The most intriguing area of research has been perhaps the intercessory prayers, which involve praying for the benefit of others. It has been found that even when the subjects and researchers were unaware that someone was praying for them, the physical and mental health of experimental group subjects improved significantly than the control group.

Role of Spirituality in Alleviating Mental Illness:

In the last few years, researchers coming from a range of disciplines including psychology, psychiatry, medicine, neuroscience, theology, gerontology, and nursing have found evidence using modern scientific methods that spirituality helps in allaying various mental and physical illnesses. Overwhelming suffering that accompanies almost all mental

and physical illnesses is reinterpreted within a spiritual framework as a journey or pilgrimage that fosters hope and individuals are able to locate meaning within their suffering. In modern societies where cohesive and supportive family structures are fast getting obliterated, spiritual and religious organizations provide much-needed social support which protects people from social isolation, bestows upon them a sense of belonging and self-esteem thereby equipping them to cope with stress and negative life events.

Depression

Spirituality helps depressive patients figure out a meaning or a purpose in their life, which they had lost due to their illness. The resurrection of meaning and purpose brings back the hope and vigor to face the difficulties of life. A research study found that for every 10-point increase in a person's intrinsic religiosity, there was a 70% increase in recovery from depressive symptoms post physical illness.

Anxiety and frustration:

Relationship between anxiety and spirituality has been explored amongst individuals who have chronic illnesses. Reduced levels of anxiety associated with spiritual activity have been found in various populations such as women with cervical cancer, individuals recovering from spinal injury, and middle-aged people suffering from cardiac problems. There is also evidence that engaging in spiritual practices leads to a reduction in anxiety in patients with anxiety disorders. One study found that women suffering from anxiety disorders who participated in Iyengar Hatha Yoga training had imperious and significant improvements in perceived stress, state and trait anxiety, fatigue, and depression. Another study found that Preksha Meditation, a Jain technique of meditation was very effective in reducing frustration levels and consequent aggression in prisoners.

Stress and posttraumatic stress disorder:

Religious coping is a ubiquitous mediator that accounts for the relationship between spirituality and mental health in times of stress. Commonly seen styles of religious coping among individuals include collaborative, deferring, and self-directing styles out of which collaborative approach has been found to be most beneficial for mental health. In collaborative style, the individual considers himself and God as partners in problem-solving and responsibility for the solution is perceived by the individual to be a shared process. It has been found that spiritual orientation aids people in dealing with aftermath of trauma; typically, positive religious coping, religious openness, readiness to face existential questions, religious participation, and intrinsic religiousness are correlated with improved posttraumatic recovery. Meditation focusing on a mantra (word with spiritual significance)

has proven to be effective in significantly reducing symptoms of stress, anxiety, and anger and in improving quality of life and spiritual well-being in war survivors.

Schizophrenia

Spiritual orientation helps people with chronic schizophrenia in processes of reconstructing a sense of self and recovery. It has been found that schizophrenic patients find hope, meaning, and comfort in spiritual beliefs and practices. Some transpersonal therapists tend to view psychosis as an attempt by the psyche to renew itself and enter new realms of consciousness by first attempting to breakdown the existing psychic structures and then activating archetypal and spiritual energies of the self. In this process there are consequent themes: to the person experiences psychic death, regresses to his beginnings, feels chosen for a special mission to save mankind and to bring about a special revolution, finally it becomes apparent that this entire process has occurred inside the person rather than in outer reality as the individual returns to ordinary consciousness.

Behavior problems in childhood and adolescence:

It has been observed that engaging children and adolescents in Pranic Healing Meditation activity leads to a marked reduction in their behavior problems including aggression, nail biting, lying, absenteeism from school, tics, bullying, and enhances their scholastic performance. Spiritual Emergencies: Disorders of the Spirit Spirituality as a path is not sans dangers. Spiritual emergency refers to the condition in which self becomes disorganized and overwhelmed by an infusion of new realms of consciousness, which it is not yet capable of integrating. Many a times people who are on a spiritual journey explicitly or implicitly experience non ordinary states of consciousness that are viewed and treated as psychosis, neurological disorders, or dissociative states through suppressive medication and therapies, as the western enterprise of psychiatry and psychology lacks a framework and expertise to comprehend these states. This is a fatal error as many patients if properly understood and treated would experience transformation and spiritual realization but given the present state of affairs they end up spending their lives in inpatient wards and rehabilitation homes trying to ground them in the very ignorance that they wished to emancipate from. At the same time, transpersonal psychology stresses that not all psychotic states are spiritual emergencies, but some surely are and acumen must be developed to differentiate between the two. There are two broad types of spiritual emergencies.

Integration of Spirituality in Psychotherapy:

Many psychotherapists are of the opinion that psychotherapy by itself is a spiritual enterprise as it provides insight that human beings are interdependent and need each other. The warmth and acceptance by the therapist allows the patient to deal with and integrate the disavowed parts of the self. Still others feel that some traditional

psychotherapies such as psychoanalysis even without making an explicit claim have the power to transform the individual by taking him on a journey from fully possessing to dispossessing and renouncing the loved other. However, transpersonal psychologists call for a more active integration between spirituality and psychotherapy and a sensitization of all mental health professionals toward transpersonal issues. There are two broad ways in which spirituality can be integrated within psychotherapy. An explicit integration occurs when therapeutic approach overtly, directly, and systematically deals with spiritual issues in therapy and utilizes spiritual methods including meditation, yoga, prayer, and teachings from sacred texts for the purpose of healing and transformation. However, others favor an indirect approach wherein the therapist is open to dealing with spiritual issues but does not initiate such discussion or use spiritual methods till the client comes up with such concerns on their own. Also, various spiritually oriented people have started recognizing the potential of modern psychotherapy in sowing seeds for a spiritual journey. They feel that in case of people who are suffering from psychological disorders, modern psychotherapy can strengthen the ego and help in breaking troublesome defenses. In contrast to a neurotic or psychotic self, this mature self that evolves from psychotherapy has the capacity to let go off control and to surrender to deeper self and can therefore lay down foundations for a spiritual evolution of consciousness. Similarly, quite a few psychotherapists are of the view that psychotherapy should start by addressing personal emotional pain but should not remain confined to the same and rather strive to move to a spiritual quest. There is little doubt that spirituality is being increasingly recognized and accepted in the mental health field as having a huge potential for transformation of individual and society

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QUALITY OF WORK LIFE AND EMPLOYEES SATISFACTION

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INTRODUCTION

Work is an integral part of our everyday life, as it is our livelihood or career or business. On an average we spend around twelve hours daily in the work place, that is one third of our entire life, it does influence the overall quality of our life. It covers the person's feelings about every aspect of work including economic rewards, benefits, security, internal & external equity, working conditions, career opportunity, decision authority & organizational & interpersonal relationships, which are very meaningful in a person's life. The term quality of work life (QWL) has different connotations to different persons. For example, to a worker in an assembly line, it just means a fair day's pay, safe working conditions, and a supervisor who treats him/her with dignity. To a young new entrant, it may mean opportunities for advancement, creative tasks and a successful career. To academics it means the degree to which members of work organization are able to satisfy important personal needs through their experiences in the organization. Since then organizations have been continuously striving to understand the determinants of quality of work life (Glasier, 1976; Elizur and Shye, 1990). For different industries, organizations and individuals there exist different set of factors, which influence the quality of work life and in turn motivate or de motivate the employees. A study of these factors is of extreme importance since a direct relationship between quality of work life and motivation, and motivation and productivity is known to exist.

Quality of work life and employee satisfaction at Max New York Life Insurance Company is considered to be the most critical aspect. It is found that there are few facilities which are unsatisfactory, and few facilities are to be provided by the organization in order to maintain, retain the employees as well the high productivity of the organization. Hence the management has to look upon the facilities that are not available and is the points where employees are dissatisfied with unavailability of the facility. Because of the facilities that are unavailable will lead for low productivity, stress, un satisfaction, etc. At the same time it is observed that when the employees are provided with internal, personal, physical, spiritual working environments, will lead for higher productivity of the organization. Though the quality of work life has always been of paramount importance, its significance came into realization during late 1960's, when various researchers (Lawler and Porter, 1966) expressed their viewpoints emphasizing the importance of understanding the factors influencing work life and its behavioral impact on performance of individuals.

DEFINITIONS OF QUALITY OF WORK LIFE

Taylor (1979) came up with components such as extrinsic job factors (e.g. wages, hours of work & working conditions) and intrinsic job factors. He states that quality of work life must have considerations such as

- Employee participation in management
- Fairness and equity
- Social support
- Self development
- Meaningful future at work

The American Society of Training and Development states “QWL is a process of work organizations which enable its members at all levels to actively; participate in shaping the organizations environment, methods and outcomes. This value based process is aimed towards meeting the twin goals of enhanced effectiveness of organizations and improved quality of life at work for employees.

Alan Price (2007) states that empowering frontline employees and emphasis on team work helps to harness intelligence & energies of employees thus creating potential for success and quality results. This is achieved through giving knowledge and competencies to handle high performance work through team work, team briefings, interpersonal skills, appraisal and information sharing.

Luthans “The overriding purpose of QWL is to change the climate at work so that the human-technological-organizational interface leads to a better quality of work life.” -

Beinum “QWL is based on a general approach and an organization approach. The general approach includes all those factors affecting the physical, social, economic, psychological and cultural well-being of workers, while the organizational approach refers to the redesign and operation of organizations in accordance with the value of democratic society”.

OBJECTIVES OF PRESENT PAPER

1. To analyse the specific issues in Quality of work life
2. To explain the reasons for Quality of work life
3. To suggest and improve the valuable offers in Quality of work life

SPECIFIC ISSUES IN QUALITY OF WORK LIFE

Following issues are highly relevant and determine the Quality of Work Life in any organization;

1. Pay and stability of employment: Good pay dominates most of the factors in employee satisfaction. Alternative means of providing wages should be developed to increase the cost of living index, profession tax etc.,

2. Occupational stress: It's a condition of strain on employee emotions. Stress is caused due to irritability, hyper excitation or depression, unstable behavior, fatigue, stirring heavy smoking and drug abuse has to be identified.

3. Organizational health Programmes: Its helps to aim at educating about health Programmes, means of maintaining and improving of health.

4. Alternative work schedules: Includes flexi times, work at home, staggered hours, reduce work hours, part time employment.

5. Participative management and control of work: The trade unions and workers believe that workers participation in management and decision - making improves QWL.

6. Recognition: Rewarding system, congratulating the employees for their achievement, job enrichment, offering membership in clubs or association, vehicles, etc recognizes the employees.

QUALITY OF WORK LIFE AND EMPLOYEES SATISFACTION

Employee satisfaction is very important aspect for any organization in order to ensure its effective functioning. In today's competitive world organizations are spending lot of time and money on employee satisfaction in an effort to improve productivity, increase customer satisfaction, and also to help the organization needs. If any organization or company which does not measured and improved the employees satisfaction may face increasing turnover, declining productivity from the people that remain, and limited ability to attract and retain qualified replacements. Dissatisfaction with working life is a problem, which affects all workers at one time or another. Hence the sustained vitality and profitability of the organization is clearly linked to the satisfaction of its work force. The problem of the employees can be solved by many methods employer should try to address the employee turnover and job satisfaction issues. The issue must be first determined in order to take effective action plan towards employees' satisfaction. Quality of work life to improve and eliminate job stress, employers can also make efforts to the aware of the workload and job demands, employer need to examine employee training, communication, reward system, coworker relationship and work environment. If the employees are given freedom to choose their own work schedules; quality and productivity of the work increases. Because of this opportunity given to the employee will also bring to the responsibility for finishing work within specified time. Non- financial rewards often have more impact than finance reorganization in attaining job satisfaction rewarding the employees is important.

Job satisfaction can be improved by the recognizing the employees' performance through providing other works, benefits, and non-financial rewards. Job satisfaction is a motivator in work endeavors, and QWL is a key indicator of the overall quality of human experience in the work place. QWL expresses a clear way of thinking about people, their work, and other organization in which their career are fulfilled. QWL establishes a clear objective that high performance can be achieved with high job satisfaction. Unclear targets

and objectives and poor communications can contribute to dissatisfaction and eventually lead to poor work performance.

REASONS FOR QUALITY OF WORK LIFE:

- a. Division of work and specialization has made the workers socially isolated from their fellow workers.
- b. Overdependence on rules, procedures and hierarchy has made the workers just like various parts of the machine.
- c. In many organizations, workers are working 14 to 15 hours a day against the accepted norms of 8 to 9 hours. This has brought the workers under stress and tension
- d. Burnout, work-stress, health hazards, monotony etc are the natural offshoots of the modern way of life. Job pressure may result in poor health on account of drinking, smoking and drug addiction.
- e. Many organisations are keeping employees on temporary or adhoc basis. There is no job security for the employees in such organisations. Such persons' overwork resulting in reduction in their general happiness.
- f. Globalisation has lowered national boundaries and mobility of workers has increased causing great changes in the work environment at factories and offices.
- g. The changing workforce of literate workers is more concerned with non- economic aspects such as self-respect, recognition, flexi-hours and organisational privacy etc.
- h. Conflicts can be prevented if workers enjoy better QWL.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to establish the relationship between employee satisfaction and organizational performance in a organization. Quality of work life and employee satisfaction is very significant for ensuring productivity sustained commitment and from the employees of an organization. The sustainability of organizational success is primarily based on the employee satisfaction and the latter is contingent upon the nature and level of quality of work life of an organization. QWL establishes a clear objective that high performance can be achieved with high job satisfaction. Unclear targets and objectives and poor communications can contribute to dissatisfaction and eventually lead to poor work performance.

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RURAL POVERTY IN INDIA: AN OUTLOOK

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ABSTRACT

A World Bank report released this week has proposed a new way to measure poverty (See Meaning), which suggests that India may have been overestimating the number of its poor. According to a separate set of figures and analysis endorsed by the Ministry of Rural Development, however, nearly 7 per cent of the country's rural population is still living in "extreme poverty". Both estimates are for 2011-12. According to the government-endorsed India Rural Development Report 2013-14, however, poverty in rural India fell much faster in the period 2004-12 as compared to the preceding decade. In this prospective we will have an outlook of the rural poverty, Antipoverty schemes in India in this paper.

INTRODUCTION:

The whole world is today confronted with the challenge of poverty, no matter whether one nation is developed or developing, socialist or capitalist. The difference lies only in its size and severity. In this the industrialized advanced countries are better placed. In India poverty is an age-old problem closely related to the evils of social system. Indian society is one of the poorest among the world community. Here poverty is not a new phenomenon but has a historical past. After independence it was thought that through enlightened planning and economic development, it would be possible to eliminate the worst features of poverty. However, even after five year plans, the position remains almost same. As per the Eleventh National Development Plan of India more than 300 million people in India are poor. With great efforts, India has managed to reduce the number of poor from 55% in 1973 to about 27% (326 million poor) in 2004. According to the recent estimates (2011-12), 216.5 million people in rural areas are poor. And still, close to one third of the total population in India lives below the poverty line and majority of poor lives in villages and rural India. India's the poorest state is Chhattisgarh where 40% of the population lives below the poverty line. 61% of poor population of India lives in seven states i.e. Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. Though 30% of rural population lives in a chronic condition of poverty but in the last three decades some improvement in the number has been seen because of anti-poverty schemes and migration from rural to urban areas. Scheduled castes and tribes are the worst sufferers of rural poverty. Recently the Planning Commission has also revised the poverty line for rural as well as urban areas. The new poverty line for rural areas is Rs 27 and for urban areas it is Rs 30 per day.

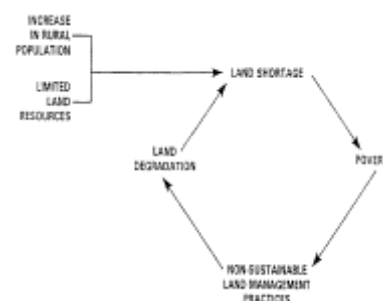
The bulk of the poor in the rural areas belong to the following categories.

(a) Agricultural labour households, without any land owned, farming about 60% of all agricultural labour households.

(b) Agricultural labour households, with very small holdings, constituting about 40% of all agricultural labour households.

(c) Non-agricultural rural labour households without land holdings, including village slowly losing its traditional employment and

(d) Small cultivators with cultivating holdings of less than 5 acres.



Rural economy massively relies on agriculture. But farming in India depends upon unpredictable monsoon leading to erratic yield. Hence water shortage, bad weather conditions and reoccurring droughts are also the reasons of poverty in rural areas. Extreme poverty compels many farmers to commit suicide. Many rural areas are so poor that these even lack the basic facilities of sanitation, infrastructure, communication, and education. The rural economy is becoming stagnate and with this India's overall economy is not growing at a pace with which it should be. There is not just a one cause of poverty but many which lead to the vivacious cycle of poverty. Rural poverty is a multi-dimensional social problem. Its causes are varied. They are as follows:

1. Climatic factors:

Climatic conditions constitute an important cause of poverty. The hot climate of India reduces the capacity of people especially the ruralites to work for which production severely suffers. Frequent flood, famine, earthquake and cyclone cause heavy damage to agriculture. Moreover, absence of timely rain, excessive or deficient rain affect severely country's agricultural production. In certain rural areas geographical factors create conditions which lead to poverty. One of the most prominent geographical factors in India is unpredictable monsoons and weather which impact the crop production and yield. Natural calamities like flood, drought, cyclones etc take their own toll and damage the crop, livestock and land. Heavy loss is caused by these results in poverty. For an example, recent Cyclone Phailin has caused an extreme damage in the Odisha and Andhra Pradesh. This has led to a much talked about onion price rise.

2. Demographic factors:

The following demographic factors are accountable for poverty in India.

(i) Rapid growth of population:

Rapid growth of population aggravates the poverty of the people. The growth of population exceeds the rate of growth in national income. Population growth not only creates difficulties in the removal of poverty but also lowers the per capita income which tends to increase poverty. The burden of this reduction in per capita income is borne heavily by the poor people. Population growth at a faster rate increases labour supply which tends to lower the wage rate.

(ii) Size of family:

Size of the family has significant bearing on rural poverty. The larger the size of family, the lower is the per capita income, and the lower is the standard of living. The persistence of the joint family system has contributed to the health and earning capacity of the ruralites.

3. Personal causes:

Believe it or not but your economic status is defined by what you do and what you are determined to do. There are many personal factors that lead to poverty. One of these is sickness. Due to poverty families do not get enough food to eat and thus lack in immunity. They become prone to many diseases. So whatsoever they earn is utilized in the treatment of the same. Sickness in turn leads to more poverty. It is rightly said that "Poverty and sickness form a vicious partnership each helping the other to add to the miseries of most unfortunate of mankind."

(i) Lack of motivation:

Lack of motivation is an important cause of rural poverty. Some ruralites do not have a motive to work hard or even to earn something. This accounts for the poverty of the ruralites.

(ii) Idleness:

Most of the rural people are lazy, dull and reluctant to work. Hence they rot in poverty.

4. Economic causes:

Rural India depends upon agriculture for everything. But most of the farmers still rely on primitive methods of agriculture. With this the annual produce is often very less. Moreover agriculture sector in India is still underdeveloped to provide enough jobs. Faulty supply chain and mismanagement cause the farmers to suffer the most. People at the top of the supply chain earn the maximum benefit of the farmer's hard work. But it should be another way round to uplift the rural India and to eradicate rural poverty.

(i) Low agricultural productivity:

Poverty and real income are very much interrelated. Increase in real income leads to reduction of the magnitude of poverty. So far as agricultural sector is concerned, the farmers even today are following the traditional method of cultivation. Hence there is low agricultural productivity resulting in rural poverty.

(ii) Unequal distribution of land and other assets:

Land and other forms of assets constitute sources of income for the ruralites. But, unfortunately, there has been unequal distribution of land and other assets in our economy. The size-wise distribution of operational holdings indicates a very high degree of concentration in the hands of a few farmers leading to poverty of many in the rural sector.

(iii) Decline of village industries:

At present consequent upon industrialization new factories and industries are being set up in rural areas. Village industries fail to compete with them in terms of quality and price. As a result they are closed down. The workers are thrown out of employment and lead a life of poverty.

(iv) Immobility of labour:

Immobility of labour also accounts, for rural poverty. Even if higher wages are offered, labourers are not willing to leave their homes. The joint family system makes people lethargic and stay-at-home. The ruralites are mostly illiterate, ignorant, conservative, superstitious and fatalistic. Poverty is considered as god-given, something preordained. All these factors lead to abysmal poverty in rural India.

(v) Lack of employment opportunities:

Unemployment is the reflection of poverty. Because of lack of employment opportunities, people remain either unemployed or underemployed. Most of these unemployed and underemployed workers are the small and marginal farmers and the landless agricultural labourers.

5. Social causes:**(i) Education:**

Education is an agent of social change and egalitarianism. Poverty is also said to be closely related to the levels of schooling and these two have a circular relationship. The earning power is endowed in the individual by investment in education and training. But this investment in people takes away money and lack of human investment contributes to the low earning capacity of individuals.

In this way people are poor because they have little investment in themselves and poor people do not have the funds for human capital investment.

(ii) Caste system:

Caste system in India has always been responsible for rural poverty. The subordination of the low caste people by the high caste people caused the poverty of the former. Due to rigid caste system, the low caste people could not participate in the game of economic progress. A Shudra was not allowed to become a trader and a Vaisya could earn his bread only by trade. Birth would decide their occupation and their economic fate. K. V. Verghese rightly observes, "Caste system acted as a springboard for class exploitation with the result that the counterpart of the poverty of the many is the opulence of the few. The second is the cause of the first."

(iii) Joint family system:

The joint family system provides social security to its members. Some people take undue advantage of it. They live upon the income of others. They become idlers. Their normal routine of life consists in eating, sleeping and begetting children.

In this way poverty gets aggravated through joint family system.

(iv) Social customs:

The ruralites spend a large percentage of annual earnings on social ceremonies like marriage, death feast etc. As a result, they remain in debt and poverty.

(v) Growing indebtedness:

In the rural sector most of the ruralites depend on borrowings from the money-lenders and land-lords to meet even their consumption expenses. Moneylenders, however, exploit the poor by charging exorbitant rates of interest and by acquiring the mortgaged land in the event of non-payment of loans. Indebted poor farmers cannot make themselves free from the clutches of moneylenders. Their poverty is further accentuated because of indebtedness. Such indebted families continue to remain under the poverty line for generations because of this debt-trap.

Major Anti Poverty programmes:

- ⇒ Integrated Rural Development Programme/Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojna was started in 1980 with an objective of all round development of rural poor. Self employment was emphasized through IRDP.
- ⇒ Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) was started in 2001 with an objective of providing employment for the rural poor.
- ⇒ Pradhanmantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY) was started in 2000 and its main focus was village level development especially in five areas including primary health, primary education, housing, rural roads and drinking water and nutrition.
- ⇒ National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) initiated in 2006 for providing legal guarantee for 100 days of wage employment. Providing employment and creating asset were the main objective of this scheme.
- ⇒ Antodaya Anna Yojana initiated in 2000 with an objective of providing food securities to poor families.
- ⇒ National Housing Bank Voluntary Deposit Scheme started in 1991 to make use of black money for constructing low cost housing for the poor.
- ⇒ Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA) started in 1982 for providing appropriate opportunities of self employment to the rural women living below the poverty line.
- ⇒ Jan Shree Bima Yojana initiated in 2000 for providing insurance security to people living below poverty line.
- ⇒ Shiksha Sahyog Yojana started in 2001 for providing education to children living below poverty line.
- ⇒ TRYSEM – Training Rural Youth for Self-Employment
- ⇒ AAY – Antyodaya Anna Yojana
- ⇒ RLEGP – Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Program
- ⇒ SFDA – Small Farmers Development Agency
- ⇒ FFWP – Food for Work Program
- ⇒ DDP – Desert Development Program
- ⇒ DPAP – Drought Prone area Program
- ⇒ Scheme for Providing Self-Employment to Educated Unemployed
- ⇒ SGSY – Swarnajayanthi Gram Swarozgar Yojna
- ⇒ PMRY – Prime Minister’s Rozgar Yojana (PMRY)

Solutions

There are many solutions but yet to be solved

- ◆ Farmers must get all facilities for irrigation.
- ◆ They should be trained and educated.
- ◆ Agriculture must be made profitable.
- ◆ The ever-rising population should be checked.
- ◆ Family planning schemes should be introduced.
- ◆ More and more industries should be set up to meet the needs of our country.
- ◆ Corruption must end. Our offices should work efficiently.
- ◆ These are some of the ways by which our poverty can be removed.

Conclusion

Poverty is a national problem and it must be solved on a war footing. The government is taking a number of steps to mitigate poverty. Eradication of poverty would ensure a sustainable and inclusive growth of economy and society. We all should do everything possible and within our limits to help alleviate poverty from our country.

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SOCIO- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF SCHEDULED TRIBES (STS) IN INDIA - PROGRAMMES AND SCHEMES

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INTRODUCTION

In India certain communities were suffering from extreme social, educational and economic backwardness arising out of age-old practice of untouchability, primitive agricultural practices, lack of infrastructure facilities and geographical isolation, and who need special consideration for safeguarding their interests and for their accelerated socio-economic development. These communities were notified as Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes as per provisions contained in Clause 1 of Articles 341 and 342 of the Constitution respectively. Between these two communities Scheduled Tribes are most backward people.

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

According to the 2011 census Scheduled Tribes comprise about 8.6 percent, of India's population. The Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950 lists 744 tribes across 22 states in its First Schedule.

Pathetic living conditions of Scheduled Tribes in India:

Most of the STs in India are living in pathetic conditions. Many of the families do not have any access to medical care. The literacy rate among the scheduled tribes is very poor. Still number of eligible tribal are not getting pension. Most of them do not hold ration cards. Most of the houses do not have kitchen and toilets. More than half of the population deprived of pure drinking water and their hamlets are not electrified. Some Tribal settlements face threat from wild animals. They are not finding proper employment. Banks are not providing loans to them; most of them take loans, mostly from private institutions or individual money lenders. They suffer with viral fever and other diseases. Their hamlets

have no proper road connectivity. They have no proper transportation. They also face problems with Maoists and police combing teams like Green hunt and CRPF teams.

Special provisions and safeguards provided in the Constitution of India:

For the Socio-economic and overall development of the Tribal people, some special provisions and safeguards have been provided in the Constitution of India and some initiatives have also been taken by the Government of India.

Constitutional Safeguards:

Article 15(4) - special provisions are made for educational advancement of the Scheduled Tribes. These provisions are like reservation of seats and relaxation in marks in admission to educational institutions, scholarships, etc.

Article 46 - the State is enjoined upon to promote with special care to education and economic interests of SC and ST and protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation.

Articles 330 and 332 - seats are reserved for SC and ST in Lok Sabha State Vidhan Sabhas.

Article 339(1) - the President may at anytime appoint a Commission to report on the administration of the Scheduled Area and the welfare of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes in the State.

Initiatives for the development of Scheduled Tribes (STs):

The majority of the tribes depend on land and forest to make a living. Their social life is also interwoven around the land they live on. They have thus a physical and emotional attachment and dependence on land and forest. In this context, launch of **Van Bandhu Kalyan Yojana**, Single Window System for Obtaining Market Information on Minor Forest Produces, Setting up of 184 **Eklavya Model Residential Schools**, Preparation of **Tribal Map of India** and Launch of **MFPNET Portal of TRIFED** were some of the important Initiatives for Tribal welfare.

Role of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs:

It is the nodal Ministry for the overall policy, planning and coordination of programmes for the development of the Scheduled Tribes (STs). The programmes and schemes of the Ministry are intended to support and supplement, through financial assistance, the efforts of other Central Ministries, the State Governments and voluntary organizations, and to fill critical gaps taking into account the needs of ST.

Tribal welfare Schemes:**Van Bandhu Kalyan Yojana (VKY):**

Introduced by the Central government in 2014 as a Central Sector Scheme with an allocation of Rs. 100 crores. The Central Government proposes to replicate the intervention with special focus on the qualitative and sustainable employment for tribal families; bridging infrastructure gaps with focus on quality; improving the quality of education and health and improving the quality of life in tribal areas.

Model Blocks: There are about 350 Blocks in the Schedule V areas where population of STs compared to total population of the Block is 50% or above. Despite several interventions in the past, these Blocks are still reeling under various facets of deprivation in so far as Human Development Indices are concerned. Through VKY, it is envisaged to develop these Blocks as model Blocks over the period of next five years with qualitative and visible infrastructural facilities. The selection of block will be made in consultation with the respective State Governments while taking into account the human development indices.

Eklavya Model Residential Schools for Scheduled Tribe students:

In the context of the trend of establishing quality residential schools for the promotion of education in all areas and habitations in the country, the Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) for ST students take their place among the Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas, the Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas and the Kendriya Vidyalayas.

Single Window System for Obtaining Market Information On Minor Forest Produces:

A Single Window System for obtaining information on Minor Forest Produces (MFPS) through Toll Free Call Service number 1800-180-1551 has been inaugurated where market rates information can be provided over phone to tribal and others on asking.

Tribal Map of India:

The Central government has issued orders to prepare detailed Tribal Map of India utilizing the technology of Geographical Information System (GIS) which will help the government while implementing different programmes and introducing new schemes and projects for tribal people.

Scheduled Tribes Girls and Student Welfare:

The welfare of tribal girls and student welfare is one of the focus areas of the Government. Educational assistance to scheduled tribe children has also been given high priority. It includes assistance for study tour to school & college going students, supply of study material to all students studying in high school, higher secondary school & colleges and assistance to provide laptop to ST students studying professional courses in approved University/institutes.

Other initiatives:

The government has given in-principle approval for recognizing the Vishva Bharati, Shanti Niketan as the other centre of excellence in the field of Tribal language and literature.

A proposal to establish a National Research Centre in the Tribal Research Institute, Bhubaneshwar to promote research activities on subjects/issues for socio-economic development and culture of States has also been approved by the Government.

Grants to Tribal Research Institutes:

There are 16 Tribal Research Institutes in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Gujarat, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Manipur and Tripura receiving Central Grant on 50:50 basis on plan scheme. These Institutes are engaged in the work of providing planning inputs to the State Governments, conducting research and evaluation studies, and collection of data, conduct of training, seminars and workshops documentation of customary laws, setting up of tribal museum for exhibiting tribal artifacts. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs releases 50% Central Share to the State Government in favour of Tribal Research Institutes

Self Employment (Swarojgar Yojna):

Financing for setting up & expansion of Income generating avocations.

Ambedkar Laghu Rin Yojna:

For poor SC Families, term loan assistance up to Rs 50000 is provided by the Corporation directly in collaboration with NSFDC.

"Institutional Support for Development and Marketing of Tribal Products/Produce" :

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India has taken a decision to implement the Scheme "Institutional Support for Development and Marketing of Tribal Products / Produce"

Scheme of coaching for Scheduled Tribes:

To promote a more level playing field, and give ST candidates a better chance to succeed in competitive examinations, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs supports a scheme for coaching for disadvantaged ST candidates in quality coaching institutions to enable them to appear in competitive examinations and succeed in obtaining an appropriate job in the public/private sector.

Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Hostels for Scheduled Tribe Girls and Boys:

Article 16 of the Constitution enables the Central government to make special provisions for the socio-economic development of the deprived sections of the society to enable them to share the facilities at par with the rest of the society. Education of Scheduled Tribes assumes added importance in the sense that it elevates their social status and equips them with the acumen to take advantage of the emerging opportunities both in employment and other economic activities.

Scheme for Release of Equity Support to the National and State Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporations:

Scheme for Release of Equity Support to the National/ State Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporations (STFDCs) is a continuing centrally sponsored scheme under which Central Government provides equity support to National Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation (NSTFDC) under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs and State Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporations (STFDCs) of various State Governments. STFDCs catering to STs in various states are provided assistance towards their Share Capital under the centrally sponsored scheme.

Scheme of Marketing Development of Tribal Products or Produce:

The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Limited (TRIFED) was established in August 1987 by the then Ministry of Welfare, Government of

India, under the Multi State Cooperative Societies Act 1984 (which has now been replaced by the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 2002). TRIFED was established with the basic mandate of bringing about the socio-economic development of tribals of the country by institutionalizing the trade of Minor Forest Produce (MFP) and Surplus Agriculture Produce (SAP) collected/cultivated by them – because tribals are heavily dependent on these natural products for their livelihood. But in many cases they did not use to get remunerative prices due to middle-men and unscrupulous traders exploiting the Tribals.

Vocational Training Centres in Tribal Areas:

It is aimed at upgrading the skills of the tribal youth in various traditional/modern vocations depending upon their educational qualification, present economic trends and the market potential, which would enable them to gain suitable employment or enable them to become self employed.

Scheme of Development of Primitive Tribal Groups:

Among scheduled tribes, there are certain tribal communities who have declining or stagnant population, low level of literacy, pre-agricultural level of technology and are economically backward. 75 such groups in 17 States and 1 Union Territory have been identified and categorized as Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs). The scheme aims at planning their socio-economic development in a holistic manner by adopting habitat development approach and intervening in all spheres of their social and economic life, so that the quality of life of PTGs is improved and a visible impact is made.

Scheme of Grant-In-Aid to Voluntary Organisations:

The prime objective of the scheme is to enhance the reach of welfare schemes of Government and fill the gaps in service deficient tribal areas, in the sectors such as education, health, drinking water, agro-horticultural productivity, social security etc.

Special Central Assistance to Tribal Sub Plan:

The Special Central Assistance (SCA) is provided by the Ministry of tribal Affairs to the State Government as an additive to the State TSP. SCA is primarily meant for family-oriented income-generation schemes in sectors of agriculture, horticulture, sericulture and animal husbandry cooperation. A part of SCA (not more than 30%) is also permitted to be used for development of infrastructure incidental to such income generating schemes.

Establishment of Ashram Schools in Tribal Sub-Plan Areas:

The objective of the scheme is to provide residential schools for Scheduled Tribes including PTGs in an environment conducive to learning to increase the literacy rate among the tribal students and to bring them at par with other population of the country.

Union Budget 2017-18 - Allocations for STs Development:

The Tribal Affairs Ministry has been allocated Rs 5,329 crore -- almost 10 per cent more than the previous year. The allocation for the welfare of Scheduled Tribes across all ministries has also witnessed an increase of more than 30 per cent from Rs 24,005 crore in 2016-17 to Rs 31,920 crore in this year's budget presented in Lok Sabha by Finance Minister Arun Jaitley.

The total schemes for Scheduled Tribes are brought down to only 261 from 307 in 2016-17. Only 8 new schemes for STs have been introduced in 2017-18.

A large amount of the already inadequate budgeted expenditure is on non-targeted schemes, which are barely useful for the development of ST community.

The Union Budget 2017-18 marks a paradigm shift in budgeting for the development of ST community, not only with the merger of plan and non-plan categories but also by moving away from the sub-plan policy of a targeted budget. Analysis of the Budget from a Adivasi perspective reveals a drastic change in the Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) component of the Budget, which have been replaced by 'allocations for welfare of Scheduled Tribes', statement 10B. This move comes despite the suggestions of the chief ministers' committee on the restructuring of centrally-sponsored schemes to bring the centrally-sponsored 'Umbrella Schemes for Development of Scheduled Tribe' as 'core to core' schemes which are to be prioritised and sanctioned by legislation. Analysis of the allocations under the TSP reveals a recurring trend of under-allocation in 2017-18, where in TSP only 1.53% of total allocations, which is not even the half of the mandated amount.

It is disheartening to see the anchoring role of 'plan' in the Budget for determining TSP left in a limbo after the removal of the plan and non-plan categories. Clear instructions which were expected to ensure an efficient, transparent and accountable formula to sustain TSP have not come from either the Ministry of Finance or the NITI Ayog.

The Ministry of Finance issued clear directions to all the relevant ministries/departments via GO No. F.1 (16)- B (AC/ 2011 dated August 23, 2016 to follow the Jadhav guidelines for

allocations to ST schemes. Post the plan and non-plan merger, using the directives of the ministry, Jadhav guidelines were supposed to be followed for calculating due allocations for STs for the current year. For previous year allocation for STs Amounts to Rs 47,276 crore, this equals to 2.32% of the total Budget expenditure. Taking this as the benchmark for allocation, in the 2017-18 Budget due allocations for STs at 2.39% of the total budgeted expenditure, which is Rs 49,992 crore for the TSP. But instead, in the Union Budget 2017-18, a total of Rs 18,073 crore for STs has been denied by the central government.

After independence so many initiatives have been taken place by the Governments and Voluntary organisations for the development of STs in India. But that is not enough; much more should be done with all sincerity.

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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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INTRODUCTION

"In many countries — rich and poor — this is often because of a perception that sustainability is expensive to implement and ultimately a brake on development. Poor countries for their part usually lack the physical infrastructure, ideas and human capacity to integrate sustainability into their development planning. Besides, they are often quite skeptical about rich countries' real commitment to sustainable development and demand a more equitable sharing of environmental costs and responsibilities. Many people also believe that environmental problems can wait until developing countries are richer.

... Ten years on, there is still no widely shared vision of what sustainable development might mean in practice. India sees the idea of a light ecological footprint as part of its cultural heritage. Japan, on the other hand, is debating whether the emphasis should be on the sustainable or on the development half of the equation."

[Roads to the Summit](#), LEAD International and Panos London, 30 August 2002.

Sustainable development is aimed at preserving and improving the quality of life permanently and in the long run. *Sustainable development* is a process aiming to improve the quality of life in the broadest sense, which cannot be restricted to financial wealth or material welfare but comprises the quality of the environment, the exercising of democratic rights, access to natural resources and to services and institutions made available by the society, along with full physical and mental health, spare time, safety, and security. Social welfare is a manifestation of the quality of the environment and that of the life of people making up society. Sustainable management of natural resources must be accompanied by economic growth generating and supporting wealth and welfare and by social justice and equality of opportunities.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT - ECONOMY

Taking account of global and regional social, environmental, and economic processes is crucial in preparing the Strategy, since in the majority of cases domestic issues can be understood only in with a view to global trends and processes and the efforts to be made in order to attain sustainable development cannot be segregated from the relevant international trends.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT - ENVIRONMENT

By 2050 the population of the world may reach 9 billion despite the fact that population growth has been slowing down during the recent decades. This growth will be a source of new social and - particularly due to growing consumption - environmental tensions. Much of this growth will take place in developing countries, whose population will account for some 88 % of the global population, though at present their consumption equals less than 15 % of the global consumption, and in many developing regions large numbers of people live in poverty and are undernourished.

Meanwhile, in developed countries the number of births is declining, life expectancy is increasing, and, consequently, the populations of developed countries are ageing. Increasing immigration may improve the demographic balance but it may also be a source of new tensions. The active part of an individual's life spent on the labour market is growing longer and in recent years the trend of people reaching a physical state at the age of 60 where they are in need of retiring has apparently been coming to an end. The global environmental load has been and is steadily growing. This process involves exploiting non-renewable natural resources, (over)use of certain resources without capability of renewal, land use, and environment pollution. Developed countries have historically played and still play a substantial role in these processes but developing countries whose economies have started to grow rapidly are also playing an increasing role in this aspect.



As an overall consequence of all this is that the balance and carrying capacity of our environment is already being threatened. At present some 1.2 billion people do not have healthy drinking water and if the current trends in water production continue unchanged, by year 2025 some two thirds of the population will not have enough water to meet their basic needs. Between 1970 and 2000 the populations of land and marine species dropped by some 30, those of freshwater species diminished by 50 %. Biodiversity and the proportion of natural areas - particularly tropical forests - is steadily declining and the number of endangered species is increasing. Although ecological efficiency has been growing, savings are absorbed by increasing consumption.

The threat of a global climate change is increasing rapidly, which may result in a significant change in the general temperature and precipitation conditions and in an

increase in extreme weather conditions and impacts. The average temperature of the surface of the Earth has been increasing steadily - but not evenly - during the recent century and a half, and sea levels have also been slowly rising. The growing risk of a global climate change is caused by the extra carbon-dioxide entering the atmosphere primarily as a consequence of human activities, most notably as a result of burning fossil fuels. According to forecasts, by 2100 the atmospheric CO₂ concentration may reach a level of 75-350 % of the concentration measured in 1750.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT - SOCIETY

The greatest tensions are caused by poverty and social exclusion, but demographic trends and the population's health status also give rise to concern. Although social and economic transition has imposed substantial burdens on most people, some disadvantaged social groups are facing increased risks of poverty and problems resulting from lack of security. Such groups include the Hungarian Roma population, unemployed people, those with low levels of educational attainment and those without qualifications, people of poor health status and those with disabilities, addicts, lone parents and endangered children, families with more than two children, people living under poor housing conditions or in disadvantaged municipalities, as well as the homeless. At the same time, a new social group of intellectuals and entrepreneurs has appeared and is growing larger and stronger with improved social positions.

Substantial shortcomings are still observed in the field of lifelong learning. On the one hand, no system of education, training, and adult training, in which the various elements are organically linked together in a coherent hierarchic regime, has evolved so far and requisites for universal access to learning have not been provided for. The instruments and forms of non-formal and of informal training are not adequately utilised, cooperation between the education and the cultural system is inadequate and consequently synergies based on efficient cooperation between education and culture are not utilised.

There are many initiatives in favour of sustainable development. However, these initiatives are often scattered, sometimes not well known (in particular, there is little exchange between the public and private sectors), and not well promoted. These initiatives, which are rarely part of a long-term plan, are conducted by a wide variety of players: private and public-sector companies, associations, NGOs, territorial authorities, educational institutions, healthcare facilities, public bodies, etc. All these initiatives sometimes constitute a local knowledge base that must be exploited, promoted, and shared. The various ministries must increasingly provide the driving force and co-ordinate, promote, and encourage all stakeholders involved in sustainable development initiatives. In view of the size of the task, sustainable development requires co-ordinated action by all of the economic actors and the public authorities.

- *“Everyone in the world depends on nature and ecosystem services to provide the conditions for a decent, healthy, and secure life.*
- *Humans have made unprecedented changes to ecosystems in recent decades to meet growing demands for food, fresh water, fiber, and energy [which has] helped to improve the lives of billions, but at the same time they weakened nature’s ability to deliver other key services such as purification of air and water, protection from disasters, and the provision of medicines....*
- *Human activities have taken the planet to the edge of a massive wave of species extinctions, further threatening our own well-being.*
- *The loss of services derived from ecosystems is a significant barrier to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals to reduce poverty, hunger, and disease.*
- *The pressures on ecosystems will increase globally in coming decades unless human attitudes and actions change.*
- *Measures to conserve natural resources are more likely to succeed if local communities are given ownership of them, share the benefits, and are involved in decisions.*
- *Even today’s technology and knowledge can reduce considerably the human impact on ecosystems. They are unlikely to be deployed fully, however, until ecosystem services cease to be perceived as free and limitless, and their full value is taken into account.*
- *Better protection of natural assets will require coordinated efforts across all sections of governments, businesses, and international institutions. The productivity of ecosystems depends on policy choices on investment, trade, subsidy, taxation, and regulation, among others.”*

[*Living Beyond Our Means: Natural Assets and Human Well-being*](#)

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN SCHEDULED CASTE WOMEN: PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES

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INTRODUCTION

Empowerment is a very complex concept which encompasses psychological, social, economic and political aspects of human behaviour. The most conspicuous feature of the term empowerment is that it contains within it the word power, which, to side step philosophical debate, may be broadly defined as control over material assets, intellectual resources, and ideology. The material assets over which control can be exercised may be physical human, or financial, such as land, water, forests, people's bodies, and labour, money, and access to money. Intellectual resources include knowledge, information, and ideas. Control over ideology signifies the ability to generate, propagate, sustain and institutionalize specific sets of beliefs, values, attitudes, and behaviour; virtually determining how people perceive and function within given socio economic and political environments. So, obviously empowerment is about changing the balance of power. In every society there are powerful and powerless groups. Power is exercised in social, economic and political relations between individuals and groups.

Women empowerment is multi-dimensional as increasing legal awareness and formulation of legislations for protection of women is legal empowerment of women, increasing economic status by encouraging income generating activities and mobilizing savings through formation of Self-Help Groups for rural women is economic empowerment and reservation in Panchayat participation is political participation. In this way, women empowerment through formation of Self-Help Groups was initiated by the Government.

Economic empowerment is of more significant, as if women are engaged in economic activities, they can earn income and as such, have economic independence. Due to such independence, women may get social status and it was basic concept behind women empowerment through Self Help Groups. Majority of the Self-Help Groups in rural areas have become successful in socio-economic empowerment of women. As such, scheduled caste women are also formed many Self-Help Groups in villages and gained advantages from these groups. Hence, it is essential to analyze the achievements made by scheduled caste women by their participation in women empowerment activities through Self-Help Groups.

The important aspect of social lives now-a-days is mostly confined to the gender issues in various socio-economic-health-demographic and cultural classifications of people in India. Especially the situation of Scheduled caste women is very pathetic. They

experience endemic gender - and - caste discrimination due to vulnerably position at the bottom of caste, class and gender hierarchies. These women also experience violence as the outcome of severely imbalanced social, economic and political power equations. Scheduled caste women are one of the largest socially segregated groups anywhere in the world, and make up 2 per cent of the world's total population. Scheduled caste women constitute about 16 per cent of the total Indian female population. The traditional taboos are the same for Scheduled caste men and Scheduled caste women. However, Scheduled caste women have to deal with them more often. Scheduled caste women are discriminated against not only by people of higher castes, but also within their own communities. Their socio - economic vulnerability and lack of political voice, when combined with the dominant risk factors of being Scheduled caste and female, increase their exposure to potentially violent situations while simultaneously reducing their ability to escape. Therefore, the situation of Scheduled caste women needs special attention.

The scheduled caste women were deprived in many aspects such as education, employment, participation in economic activities, etc. Especially in rural areas, the scheduled caste women are disadvantaged in two aspects that are from the gender and their castes. Further, the Self-Help Groups are playing a significant role in empowerment of scheduled caste women. But, it is noted that there is need to know that whether the scheduled caste women are treated equally with all the women of other castes. It is also essential to examine the benefits derived from Self-Help Groups to scheduled caste women in terms of socio-economic equality, status, respect, gender equality, economic independence, curbing discrimination, etc. It is also needed to know the increase in socio-economic status of the scheduled caste women through their participation in Self-Help Group activities.

Micro-finance with Self Help Groups plays an effective role for promoting women empowerment. It is not only an efficient tool to fight against poverty, but also as a means of promoting the empowerment of the most marginalized sections of the population, especially women. The role of self help groups is very significant in the present day context both in motivating women to save at least some money regularly and to use that amount as investment in income generating activities. At present, Self Help Groups (SHGs) are widely used as an instrument to change the conditions of women socially and economically, once socio-economic experiment is achieved it would have implication on the overall development of women.

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