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## Political participation of Tribal people in Administration — A case study of Mayurbhanj in Odisha

Sunaram Hembrom, Research Scholar, Department of Political Science, KIIT School of Social Science, KIIT University

### Introduction:

Political participation is generally referred to when common people play a role in the activities of the govt. It takes all forms of action by which citizens “take part” in the operation of administration. The taking part may be at any level from village to the country and it may be of any type e.g. advisory or in decision making or implantation etc. People may participate through governmental or voluntary bodies. The political participation of tribal people those who are regarded as the most deprived section of the society is a matter of serious concern in the country. Though their apathetic attitude toward their involvement in any governmental activities in any form people based governance is aimed at putting people at the centre of decision making in matters relating to governance. It can be seen both as an idea and a process that needs to be sustained on a continuous basis to become effective. In the context of tribal people, the notion of ‘governance where people matter, needs to be understood within the frame work to tribal their system of governing their own community to unravel the linkage between effective political participation and good governance as it has historically evolved most decisions on social, cultural political issues were taken at the district level. First it encouraged decision making through consensus not a forced majority vote. Second, appointed leaders were held accountable through an annual performance review not a five-yearly voting system without ‘right to recall’. The tribal governance focuses on structure, processes and issues specific to tribal governments, provides current and future tribal leaders with the knowledge and skills needed to work successfully in Indian country people. Political participation in administration means collective and continuous action with an aim for improving their living conditions. The major objective of political participation is to involve people in planning, project formulation, implementation, monitoring and review of local level development initiative. One the operation, maintenance and repair of a facility, which benefits them. Thus building capabilities of beneficiaries political participation enhances possibility sharing of information not just about needs and deficiencies but also about possible means of solution.

### Problem:

Though the tribal people's political participation is increasing periodically a greet section of that society show their apathy towards their involvement in administration. They are showing their unwillingness due

to their bad economic, political and social background. Though who are in power from their community are not helpful for new participates.

### **Review of Literature:**

There exists plenty of literature on the tribals of India. While the tribals of India have been the subjects of research and study for a pretty long time, much of the studies on tribes have been done from sociological, anthropological, cultural or historical perspective. While some scholars have tried to romanticise them, others have tried to look at them as curious anthropological species or as exotic museum pieces. Studies have also been conducted with regard to modernisation, political socialisation, and socio-economic transformation of the tribes. Of late, a great deal has been written on the need for bringing the tribals of this country into the mainstream of national life. But, a review of the available literature reveals that there are very few studies on tribal development administration. While there are only a few books available on tribal development administration, which are based on research works carried out by scholars from different perspectives, most of the studies concerning development administration consist of edited books, and compilation of papers presented in conferences and seminars.

For example Panda's *Political Participation of Tribals*, Singh's *Tribal Development Administration*, Louis's *Right of Scheduled Tribes of India Acts, Commissions and Recommendations*, Prasad and Sinha's *Tribal Development in India*, are all such works which belong to the above category. These volumes contain varieties of articles written by anthropologists, sociologists, social workers, policy-makers, planners and administrators which address themselves to the problem of tribal development or have some kind of bearings on tribal development administration.

Tribal development administration, being a relatively neglected area of inquiry, an attempt is made here to review the available literature on the subject or those relevant works which have some kind of bearing on the subject. In the succeeding paragraphs, a review of relevant articles published in the aforesaid edited volumes has been made linking them together on the basis of problems raised.

Dealing with the *tribal development administration*, Samal (2001) observes that the complex nature of an administrative set-up and the complexities involved in the administration of development program create problems for the uneducated and simple-minded tribals. Emphasizing the fact that the ethnocentrism of tribal people, their religious beliefs, social customs and traditions, traditional institutions, language and the problem of communication have bearing on the development programs that are to be administered

also observes that the administration as the agent of social change in most of the developing countries including India has to be aware of the situation and the environment where it operates.

On the whole, the scholars and administrators through their articles published in the aforesaid volumes emphasized on an adequate understanding of the problems of the tribes and their way of life. Attributing the failure of programs of tribal development to the rigid bureaucratic procedure, lack of flexible approach, a missionary zeal, shortage of properly qualified manpower and the lack of appropriate and effective coordinating mechanism to administer the development programs, they emphasized the need for and importance of building up inner-strength of the people to improve their organizational capabilities. In preparing and implementing the development programs for the tribals, the scholars emphasised on the need for planners and administrators to understand the cultural background of the tribal societies and suggested appropriate training programs for the lower level personnel.

However, most of the article in the aforesaid volumes dealt with such aspects as historical background to tribal development, the philosophy of tribal development followed by the structural pattern of tribal development administrative machinery and the problems which the tribal people of India, in general, are facing. Aiming to cover almost all aspects of tribal development administration, in most cases, textual treatment was given to the subject. The studies also highlighted the policies of tribal welfare, the nature and extent of development undertaken for the overall development of tribals and particularly for the development of their economy, health and educational status, so as to bring them closer to, if not on par with, the people in the mainstream. While, the literatures related with the tribal development administration available in Orissa are structural in their approach. Most of them are general and informative in nature. Hardly any systematic attempt has been made for studying the development administration in tribal areas in a scientific way. Whatever literature is available, it serves only as a background material for researchers to gain first-hand knowledge about tribal development administration in the state.

Therefore, a review of the available literature makes it clear that the subject of tribal development administration has long been a neglected area. Further, when it comes to Orissa, hardly much study has been made in this respect. Studies on tribal development administration available, if any, are descriptive in nature and have given more importance to the structural aspects of development administration than the functional dimensions. Further, the studies that have addressed themselves to the problem of tribal development administration are mainly in the form of papers and notes written for seminars and

conferences, which confine themselves to mere suggestions and observations without any empirical support.

Thus, while very little attention has been given to study the problems of tribal development from an administrative and organisational perspective and the complexities of interactions and inter-linkages involved in the process of their functioning, hardly any attempt has been made for a scientific explanation of the forces and factors and factors that impair the performance of tribal development administration. Despite their critical importance in any development project or strategy for tribal development, the functional dimensions of tribal development administration, the functional dimensions of tribal development administration have largely remained neglected. It is to plug this research gap that the present study was taken up to study the dynamics of tribal development administration by critically analysing the processes and problems relating to the functioning of the tribal development administrative system.

#### **Study Area:**

The present study will be conducted in Bahalda Block of Mayurbhanj District in Odisha including all the panchayat under Bahalda Block. This study of focuses on Bahalda Block because of the majority of the political participation of tribal people in administration: A case study of Mayurbhanj District in Odisha.

#### **Objective of the study:**

1. To study people political participation in Odisha in general and tribal people political participation in particular.
2. To study political participation of tribal people in Mayurbhanj District.
3. To study their willingness or unwillingness in their political participation in administration.
4. To study the problem they face in political participation in administration.

#### **Methodology:**

To study the political participation of tribal people in the administration and their problem qualitative and qualitative methods should be used to collect appropriate information and a good questionnaire will be arranged statistical and analytical data will be given. Necessary information will be collected from primary and secondary sources. Data will be analysed using suitable statistical packages and an analytical report will be prepared. A research scholar has to select an appropriate methodology to conduct and complete his research work successfully. Without a suitable methodology, a researcher cannot make data

collection in a systematic manner and assemble and analyse the collected data properly. After the research problem is identified, the next important step for the scholar to choose an opposite methodology for proceeding in his work. Bahalda Block a Scheduled Area in Mayurbhanj district of Odisha, has been selected as the area of this study as this area has the uniqueness of being both a tribal as well as a rural area and the entire Sub-division has been declared a Scheduled Area by the President of India. Though people of different categories are found in this area, it is mostly inhabited by tribal people of different groups. Hence, such a rural and tribal area provides a suitable universe for studying political participation of the level tribal leaders at grassroots level political institutions.

### **Overview of the People:**

Democracy is based on the preamble that the ultimate power belongs to people and association of all people in the political process is totally indispensable for securing legitimacy and stability of a political system. For the success of a democracy, the continuous and effective participation of all in the decision-making process is most essential.

But, though India claims to be the largest democracy in the world many people do not take much interest in political affairs of the country. The question of involving all in the country's decision-making process has vexed the policy makers, academicians and other concerned persons. In this context, ensuring political participation of the tribal people of India in the country's political process assumes special importance.

The tribal people in Odisha constitute a sizable section of the State's population and account for 22.21 percent of it. Without their involvement in the mainstream socio-economic-political process of the state, there cannot be true democracy in the country. Their political participation provides an interesting theme of research.

The present research work makes a modest attempt to provide an insight into the political involvement of the tribals by making a study of the political engagement of grassroots level tribal leaders of Bahalda Scheduled Area in the state of Odisha. It also examines the pattern of the political culture of the tribal leaders and presents other relevant facts about the universe of study.

### **Conclusion**

Political participation of tribal people should be helpful to other tribal people and their locality, one's involvement should be a boon to the whole community, not a bane their increasing involvement have one a great change in their life and community.

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