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2. **Impact of Janjatiya Gaurav Pakhwada on Tribal Communities in Chhattisgarh: Policy Evaluation, Cultural Preservation, and Socioeconomic Development**

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of Janjatiya Gaurav Pakhwada on tribal communities in Chhattisgarh, with a focus on cultural pride, socioeconomic development, and policy implementation. Adopting a mixed-methods approach—comprising a review of existing literature, secondary data analysis, and field-based anthropological observations in the Bastar region—the research evaluates the effectiveness of key central and state initiatives, including Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS), Minor Forest Produce (MFP) procurement programmes, and cultural outreach campaigns. The findings indicate a perceptible increase in cultural participation, awareness of tribal heritage, and engagement with welfare schemes. However, challenges related to accessibility, monitoring, and long-term sustainability persist. The paper concludes with evidence-based recommendations aimed at strengthening policy outcomes and ensuring inclusive and sustainable tribal development.

Keywords: *Janjatiya Gaurav Pakhwada, Tribal Development, Chhattisgarh, Policy Evaluation, Cultural Preservation, Socioeconomic Empowerment*

Introduction

Chhattisgarh is one of India's most tribal-dominated states, with Scheduled Tribes constituting approximately 30.6 per cent of its population. The state is renowned for its rich indigenous cultural heritage, diverse languages, rituals, and ecological knowledge systems. Despite this cultural wealth, tribal communities continue to face persistent challenges related to education, livelihoods, health, and social inclusion.

Janjatiya Gaurav Pakhwada has emerged as a national initiative aimed at recognising tribal contributions, promoting awareness of constitutional rights, strengthening cultural identity, and reinforcing the implementation of welfare policies. Drawing upon the author's long-term engagement in Bastar as a Tribal Research Officer and anthropologist, this study critically analyses the impact of

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the initiative on cultural pride, educational participation, and livelihood outcomes among tribal communities in Chhattisgarh.

Literature Review

Cultural Identity and Social Cohesion

Scholars emphasise that tribal societies sustain social cohesion through language, rituals, festivals, and customary practices (Xaxa, 2001). Cultural pride not only reinforces identity but also facilitates intergenerational knowledge transfer and community participation.

Socioeconomic Development Programmes

Government interventions such as EMRS, MFP procurement mechanisms, and targeted welfare schemes have contributed to improvements in literacy levels and household incomes. However, the impact of these initiatives varies significantly across regions due to infrastructural and administrative disparities (TRIFED, 2024).

Policy Implementation Challenges

Existing studies identify challenges including remoteness, limited administrative capacity, weak monitoring frameworks, and sustainability concerns, particularly in conflict-affected and forested tribal regions (Singh & Sahu, 2022).

Author's Previous Research

The author's earlier works (Kavi, 2015; Kavi & Singh, 2018; Kavi & Singh, 2019) provide detailed ethnographic and evaluative insights into Bastar Dussehra, school dropout patterns, and broader trajectories of tribal development, forming an important empirical foundation for the present study.

Objectives

The study seeks to:

1. Evaluate the impact of Janjatiya Gaurav Pakhwada on tribal cultural pride and community participation.
2. Assess the effectiveness of government programmes related to education, livelihoods, and cultural preservation.
3. Identify key challenges and emerging opportunities in programme implementation.
4. Offer evidence-based recommendations to strengthen policy design and delivery.



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Methodology

Research Design

A mixed-methods approach was adopted, integrating qualitative and quantitative perspectives.

Data Sources

- Government reports from the Tribal Welfare Department, Chhattisgarh, and the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India.
- DISE/UDISE+ data on school enrolment and dropout trends in Bastar.
- Field-based anthropological observations and experiential insights documented by the author.

Analytical Framework

The analysis involves a comparative assessment of programme reach, participation, and outcomes, with illustrative case observations highlighting best practices as well as implementation gaps.

Results

I. Educational Impact

EMRS institutions have contributed to improved enrolment among tribal students, particularly at the secondary level. Scholarship schemes have positively influenced girls' participation in education. Nevertheless, dropout rates remain a concern, pointing to gaps in mentoring, language support, and residential care (India Today, 2025).

II. Livelihood and Economic Impact

MFP procurement programmes have provided critical income support to forest-dependent households. Chhattisgarh accounts for nearly 72 per cent of national MFP procurement, underscoring its central role in tribal livelihoods (TRIFED, 2024). Challenges persist in ensuring equitable benefit distribution and improving market linkages.

III. Cultural Preservation and Pride

Cultural mobilisation under Janjatiya Gaurav Pakhwada has led to increased participation in traditional dance, music, festivals, and handicrafts. However, mechanisms for sustained intergenerational transmission of knowledge remain limited.

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IV. Key Challenges

- Geographic isolation and infrastructural deficits in tribal areas.
- Limited monitoring and outcome-based evaluation of programmes.
- Cultural initiatives often remain symbolic, with insufficient integration into livelihood and educational frameworks.

Discussion

The findings suggest that Janjatiya Gaurav Pakhwada has had a positive influence on cultural pride and social awareness among tribal communities. When aligned with education and livelihood interventions, the initiative demonstrates the potential to generate broader developmental outcomes. Strengthening participatory policy design and adopting data-driven monitoring systems are essential for ensuring equitable and sustainable benefits.

Recommendations

1. Strengthen EMRS through enhanced mentoring, digital learning resources, and targeted dropout-prevention strategies.
2. Improve MFP programmes by expanding market access, value addition, and income diversification opportunities.
3. Integrate cultural initiatives with skill development, entrepreneurship, eco-tourism, and creative industries.
4. Establish robust monitoring frameworks covering education, health, livelihoods, and cultural indicators.
5. Prioritise interventions in high-density tribal blocks with tailored, context-specific strategies.

Conclusion

Janjatiya Gaurav Pakhwada has contributed to heightened cultural awareness and a renewed sense of pride among tribal communities in Chhattisgarh. In conjunction with central and state welfare policies, the initiative holds significant promise for inclusive tribal empowerment. Addressing challenges related to accessibility, monitoring, and livelihood integration will be critical for realising its full developmental potential.



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