



TRIBALS ARE THE FIRST VICTIMS OF DEVELOPMENT: A STUDY IN TWO VILLAGES OF LAKHANPUR OPEN CAST MINES OF MCL, DIST. JHARSUGUDA, ODISHA

Manoj Kumar Badhai*

Ph.D Scholar, P.G. Department of Sociology, Sambalpur University, Odisha.

*Corresponding Author

ABSTRACT Development and Displacement are interlinked. After the liberalization of Indian economy the idea of “Industries are the temples of modern India” has picked up the momentum with speed along with other required infrastructural development. Though the vulnerability of the development induced displaced people have been reported all over the country, the plight of the displaced tribals needs specific attention as tribal areas are mostly preferred for the development projects, their age old backwardness further push them to the extreme of vulnerability.

KEYWORDS : Development, Displacement, Liberalization, Indian Economy, Tribals, Vulnerability

INTRODUCTION

As per the 2011 Census tribals constitute 8.6 percent of Indian population. Apart from all the North Eastern states, tribals constitute 30.6 % in Chhattisgarh, 26.2% in Jharkhand, 22.2% in Odisha and 21.1% in Madhya Pradesh of the state's population (**Census:2011**). It is needless to say that all the above states are mineral based and various mineral based industries have come up along with other mega development projects in tribal dominated areas and consequently, the major risks, they encounter, like other oustees as identified by **Cernea (1996)**. **Fernandes (1996)** state that the oustees are reduced to subordinate position in their own land and find serious economic impact upon agrarian population

DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN INDIA AND RATIONALE OF STUDY:

Major development projects like Dams, Mines, Industries, Road and Railways and the conservation oriented projects like Wild life sanctuaries, Bio-Sphere reserves etc. have been displacing peoples from their abode. The pace of development has picked up its momentum after the liberalization of Indian economy in 1991. More development projects are being established resulting in massive displacement. Consequent upon displacement, as Cernea stated “Like becoming a refugee, being forcibly ousted from one's land and habitat by a dam, reservoir or highway is not only immediately disruptive and painful; it is also fraught with serious long-term risks of becoming poorer than before displacement, more vulnerable economically and disintegrated socially”(1996).

Notwithstanding the massive development induced displacement all over India researchers across discipline have been reporting the plight of the oustees. In Odisha like other tribal dominated and mineral based states, the ongoing “Steel Revolution” is giving rise to various movements, more often supported by naxalites along with the seriousness raised by civil society. Tribals with age old hereditary unrecorded ownership of land, illiteracy, simple mindedness suffer continuously, even to the extent of displacement more than once in their life time. The debate like “development for whom “continues to engage the researchers, policy makers and civil society members. Tribals live in forest areas. Most of the developmental projects are found in the forest areas due to:

- Availability of mineral resources
- Less population density
- Strategic location
- Availability of more Government land
- Least reordered land by the people staying in the area
- Least possibility of resistance of the people
- Availability of more land for the project

OBJECTIVES:

The major objectives of the study are-

- To examine the socio-economic condition of the displaced tribals.
- To understand the vulnerability of the tribals of the region in a historical perspective.

FIELD DESCRIPTION AND METHODOLOGY:

The study on the basis of which the present report is based has been undertaken on the sample pre-displaced and after displaced tribal families of Lakhanpur open cast project, IB coalfields (MCL), located in Jharsuguda district, situated in the tribal Pocket of Odisha. The data is collected from two different types of respondents of Project Affected People (PAP).

1. Before displacement phase, after identification
2. After the phase of displacement and rehabilitation

The sample size is 120; 60 from each of village. The non-availability of people during our fieldwork (March – July, 2018), restricted the sample size. Diagnostic research design is adopted. Primary data is collected by structured interview schedule. Other tools like observation, genealogical, case study, group interviews are also used to sharpen and cross check the data. Data is also collected from the MCL functionaries, and members of the civil society of the area. Secondary source data are official records from various related offices and libraries.

DETAILS OF THE VILLAGES STUDIED AND ANALYSIS:

On the basic of the above backdrop two villages are identified for the studies, which are described below.

Table 01: Details of the two villages studied

Sl.No.	Name of the Village	At the stage of displacement	Distance from Lakhanpur mines	Total Household	Detail of the population			
					ST	SC	OBC	GEN.
1	Kerualbhal	Identified for displacement in 2007	0.5km	129	Oram-127	Ganda-02		0
					Total	127	02	
2	Charla	Identified for displacement in 1987 Displaced in 2012	2.5km	142	Munda-02	Ganda-43	Kulta-18	Brahmin-02
					Oraon-13	-	-	Rajput-03
					Bhuyan-10	-	-	-
					Gond-34	-	-	-
Total				59	43	18	05	

Source: field survey conducted during March – July, 2018

Table 02: Dimension of Socio-Economic Change among Displaced Family

ASPECTS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHANGE	BEFORE DISPLACEMENT	AFTER DISPLACEMENT
Ownership of land and Agriculture as household primary occupation	39(65%)	00
Profession/Job as household primary occupation	06(10%)	19
Wage labour as household primary occupation	12(20%)	36
Enterprise/Caste-based specialization etc. as household primary occupation	03(5%)	05
TOTAL	100%	60
Access to common property resources (CPRS)	60	00

Source: field study, March – July, 2018

Note: n = 60; figures in addition refer to row-wise percentage

MAJOR FINDINGS:

- The common socio-economic condition of the oustees has worsened significantly.
- Socio-economic inequalities have widened.
- The cropping pattern has changed extremely.
- Dependency on trees and livestock has reduced substantially.
- Increase in the ratio of labourers.
- Growing trend towards nuclear family.
- Poor dwelling conditions of the oustees.
- Inappropriate use of compensation money.
- Increase in the occurrence of indebtedness.
- Drastic reduction in the socio-economic condition of women in the PAPs.
- Vulnerability of the aged due to the breaking down of joint family and disintegration of the family for earning livelihood elsewhere.
- Once the PAP is identified for displacement, the real displacement takes more than decades. During this period, they remain with uncertainty and also cannot develop alternative livelihood options on their own. Therefore the concerned company should try for capacity building to equip the PAPs for alternative livelihood options.

CONCLUSION:

In view of these after effects of displacement, especially on the tribals it is essential not only to identify, avoid and mitigate risks in each development project that involves displacement, but also to focus on benefits over and above compensation and rehabilitation for damages as well as benefit sharing arrangement. A far-sighted approach demands long term commitments, financial and institutional guarantees and the use of professional approach in dealing with the issues of social development of indigenous people. Constant monitoring by technically competent independent observers can go a long way in ensuring more effective resettlement and rehabilitation arrangements in case of the displaced families which can end up in not only restoring the pre-displaced living condition of the millions of displaced families but also in substantially bringing in improvement in their socio-economic condition in the post-project period.

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