

# TRIBAL POPULATION IN DAHOD DISTRICT OF GUJARAT: AN EVALUATION OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

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## Abstract

***The Indian tribes as elsewhere in the world is known for their unique ways of living and specific culture which provide them a distinct identity on national picture. The peculiar life style, basic and traditional technology and their tendency to inhabitant the private and isolated from the mainstream of national life. Dahod district of Gujarat is covered by forest and inhabited by scheduled tribes. This paper reports the socio-economic profile of the scheduled tribes in this region. Present study has taken the sample of tribal households from Patelia and Bhils tribes. Seventy per cent of sample tribal populations are illiterate. More than 90 percent were engaged in agriculture. Most of the families' income depends on primary sector and 48 percent tribal heads have income around 5,000.00 to 10,000.000. At present both government and NGOs have put more attention on health and education for them.***

**Keyword: Socio-Economic, Scheduled Tribes, Government, NGOs.**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

India holds a unique position on the tribal map of the world. The Indian constitution includes 571 tribal communities in article 342. From those, 108 are found in the north-east, 176 in central India, and 95 in Western India, and 12 tribal's group in various islands. In addition, Central zone consisting of West Bengal, Jharkhand, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, and Maharashtra consisting of more than 85 per cent of total tribal population.

The Scheduled Tribes are the early inhabitants of separate demarcated land of Gujarat. Tribal population

is concentrated in the south-eastern region of the state. The state has consisted 14.8 per cent tribal population out of total population (census 2001). Mostly, they are Bhil, Charan, Dhanka, Dhodia, Dubla, Bharwad, Gamit, Kali, Kolcha, Parashi, Rabari, Siddi, Vasava, Vagari and Wari, etc. The State of Gujarat comprises of a total of 43 talukas in 12 Scheduled Tribe dominant districts. These talukas comprise of a population of 75 lack ST individuals and declared as Tribal Sub Plan region of the state.

## 2. DAHOD DISTRICT: AN OVERVIEW

Dahod is located at south-eastern part of Gujarat and was divided from Panchamahals District in 1979. This district comprises with 7 talukas and 696 villages. Dahod is the head quarter of the district and shared its border with Rajasthan state in north and Madhya Pradesh in south-east. According to 2011 Census Dahod had total population of 2,126,558 out of which the male population was 1,070,843 and female population was 1,055,715 respectively. As against of 1,636,433 of which male were 824,208 and remaining 812,225 were female in 2001. Out of total population in 2001, the total 1182509 was STs Population.

## 3. NATURAL RESOURCES

Dahod district has swelling topography, hard rocky environment, and medium black soil having low fertility with altitude varying from 75m to 300m. Due to loss of vegetable cover soil is subjected to constant erosion in the hilly area of the region. The main rivers of the district are Machan, Ana's, Khan, Kali I and II, Hadaf, Panam and Kabutri. The rivers Sapi, Dausi, Wankdi, Sukhi Nadi are sub-revers of river Hadaf. The Welwa and Nalisher Nadi are tributaries of Panam. Among all revers of the district,

the Anas is a perennial river where as the other are seasonal rivers.

#### 4. THE PROBLEMS

Human Development Index (HDI) most backward talukas in Gujarat it must be the tribal talukas. The Human Development Index position is very poor in terms of education, health, and quality of life. Agriculture, forest and construction are the main livelihood sources in Dahod district. The maximum share of revenue comes from the primary sector i.e. agro-based products in the district. As a result, agriculture plays an important role for improving the socio-economic condition of the region. Nearly, 90 per cent tribal populations are dependent on agriculture in monsoon season. It has also recognized that paddy, maize, are the chief Kharif crops whereas Rabi crops are wheat, gram, groundnut and soybean in summer. In addition, horticulture, floriculture, is cultivated in this region. Due to less efficiency of agriculture productivity a couple of tribal population have migrated to industrial areas like Surat, Ahmedabad, Gandhinagar, as a result it which leads to increase the unemployment and poverty. Nearly, 46 per cent tribal population are literate, this is very less than the national average even neighboring districts i.e. Vadodara and Panchmahals.

This paper aims to provide a brief profile of tribal population of Dahod district of North-eastern Gujarat. More specifically it describes certain characteristics of the demographic problems, socio-cultural, economic and livelihood of the scheduled tribes living in the district.

#### 5. THE DATA AND METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The primary study has applied on tabulation analysis for clear understanding the nature and problems of tribal population. Sample percentage, ratio, and average, have taken for quantitative support of the existing tribe's socio-economic condition in Dahod district of Gujarat. The data is based on primary and secondary sources. Primary is collected from tribal households, relating to various parameters of socio-economic status, through well designed and structured questionnaire. Secondary data collected from Ministry of Tribal Development Department of Gujarat Office, various Books and Journals etc.

The study has taken 50 households respondent from Dahod talukas of Dahod district.

Talukas	Tribal community		percent
Dahod	Bhil	Patelia	Total
	25	25	50

#### 6. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Bhil and Patelia tribes are numerically, the largest scheduled tribal groups of eastern Gujarat. So, that majority of tribal populations are found in Dahod district alone. They are identified in the form of (i) culturally and geographically isolated (ii) relatively non-hierarchical and non-differentiated (iii) low level of technology and development.

#### 7. FAMILY SIZE AND COMPOSITION

Basically, the tribal families of Dahod district are classified into two categories i.e. nuclear and joint. The nuclear families consist of parents with two or three children whereas; joint family includes parents, grandparents, and children etc. Based on the household survey conducted, the distribution of tribal households by the type of the family is shown in table 2.

Sr.No	Types of family	Number of households	Per cent
1	Joint	12	24
2	Nuclear	38	76
3	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

Source- Field survey, 2012

Out of the 50 households, this study has found 12 joint families (24 per cent) and whereas 38 families were interested to live in a nuclear family set up. It forms (76 per cent) of total.

The size of the family is a crucial factor in determining the well-being of each and every tribal individual. Distributions of tribal households by the family size are shown in the following table.

<b>Table-3 Distribution of Tribal Households by the Family Size</b>			
Sr.No	Family size	No. of households	Per cent of households
1	2 – 4	14	28
2	4 – 6	17	34
3	6 – 8	9	18
4	8 to above	10	20
<b>5</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source- Field survey, 2012*

It is noticed at the time of survey that majority of the tribal people surveyed are middle age couples who do not have any idea of reducing the birth rate. But it was observed that newly couples are aware of the need of reducing birth.

### 8. HEAD OF THE RESPONDENT HOUSEHOLDS

Recent trends in migration and occupation have changed the concept of the head of family among the tribal group of Dahod district. Traditionally, there was male domination in tribal communities. However, of late some radical changes have taken place about 66 per cent female are traditional headship of the family. Owing to scarcity of agricultural land and several other factors, family heads often leave their village seasonally and migrate to the neighbor place. There are several such female headed families and head of the household's age

is considered as a determining factor of economic status.

<b>Table-4 Distribution of Age of Head of the Tribal Households</b>			
Sr.No	Age of the respondents	Head of the households	Percent
1	Below – 35	27	54
2	35 -54	15	30
3	45 -60	7	14
4	Above 60	1	2
<b>5</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source- Field survey, 2012*

It is clear that, 98 per cent of the heads of the tribal households are the economically active age group. Only 2 per cent are in the age group of above sixty.

### 9. INCOME OF THE HOUSEHOLDS

Traditionally, the tribal people earn their livelihood through agriculture. A new source of income besides land is employment in government and private sectors. Very few tribes are technically educated and only a limited number hold good jobs.

<b>Table-5 Distribution of Family Income</b>			
Sr.No	Income	No. of households	Per cent
1	2000 - 5000	8	16
2	5000 -10,000	24	48
3	10,000 -15,000	8	16
4	15,000	10	20
<b>5</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

Source-Field survey, 2012

It was observed that, income of the family depends on size of family. However, the income of the households is spent on necessity goods only.

### 10.GENDER WISE EMPLOYMENT

More than 70per cent of male and female workers in Dahod district are agricultural labourers. The male workers wage is (₹ 100) and female working groups are (₹ 80) per day.

### 11.LITERACY STATUS

It was found that the problem of illiteracy is acute among the tribal community of Dahod district. The literacy rates of tribal population are only 45 per cent, the low literacy is considered to be the root cause of their socio-economic backwardness. It is observed that there are very few beneficiaries of the literacy mission. The literacy rate of tribes is shown in the table no 6.

<b>Table-6 Education Profile of Scheduled Tribes</b>					
Sr.No	Male	Female	Per cent of male	Per cent of female	Total per cent

1.( primary )	8	6	16	12	14
2.(upper primary)	8	6	16	12	14
3.(secondary )	9	2	18	4	11
4.(higher secondary)	5	1	10	2	6
<b>5. ( illiteracy rate )</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>55</b>
Total	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source- Field survey, 2012

At present, the most tribal parents are concerned about the schooling of their children and drop-out-rate is also not much; it was 18 per cent.

### 12.TYPES OF HOUSES

The most important indicator of socio-economic status namely habitation and housing condition would provide a better understanding of the social life of tribes. It is observed that, most of tribe lives in remote areas and transport available to the villages.

<b>Table-7 Types of Houses</b>			
Sr.No	Categories of Houses	House Holds	Per cent
1	Kachha	46	92
2	Semi-Puccaa	3	6
3	Pacca	1	2
<b>4</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

Source- Field survey- 2012

Table No. 7 shows that, the large numbers of tribal family having kachha houses and only six per -cent of family have semi-pucca houses.

### 13.LAND OWNERSHIP

Broadlytribal peasantry has been divided in to two categories viz- landed and landless. Distribution of tribal households according to the possession of land is presented in the table 8 below. This following table shows that 92 per cent of tribal populations are land holders.

<b>Table -8 Land Holdings ( in Guntha)</b>			
Sr.No	Categories	Households	Per cent
1	Land less	4	8
2	Less than 1 Guntha	9	18
3	1-2	13	26
4	2-4	2	4
5	4-6	7	14
6	6 to above	15	30
<b>7</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source- Field survey 2012*

### 14.IRRIGATION FACILITIES

Agriculture provides employment to more than half of the working population in Dahod district. Cropping pattern is the central element of agricultural land use. Expansion of irrigation facilities, introduction of high yielding variants of crops, agricultural tools and machines, creation of a wide market and development of infrastructural facilities in the form of link roads influence the cropping pattern to a large extent. But it noticed that most of tribal people are not aware of the modern agricultural development and practices. The main cultivation of non-tribe is wheat and paddy which is considered as a modern crop by the tribes and now

the tribes are slowly following the footsteps of the non-tribes. Both government and non-government are providing irrigation facilities to the tribal villages.

<b>Table-9 Irrigation Facilities</b>			
Sr.No	Categories	Households	Per cent
1	Irrigated	28	56
2	Unirrigated	18	36
3	Landless	4	8
4	Total	50	100

*Source-Field survey, 2012*

This data shows fifty six per cent of tribal farmers have benefited through source of irrigation.

<b>Table 10- Source of Irrigation</b>			
Sr.No	Categories	No. of tribal farmers (uses)	percent
1	Tank	8	16
2	Bore well	10	20
3	Canal	10	20
4	Un irrigated	18	36
5	Landless	4	8
6	Total	50	100

*Source-Field survey, 2012*

The source of irrigation facilities providing through Canal, Tank, and Burwell these irrigation facilities provides two cropping session Kharif and Rabi session.

## 15.AVAILABILITY OF BASIC AMENITIES IN THE HOUSE

A house that is well set with the minimum level of basic amenities is very necessary for a healthy living but the housing conditions of the tribes very poor. Some of the basic luxurious items like television, refrigerator, and vehicle etc. are the indicators of economic condition, and it also depends on income size of the tribal families. The details about the availability of basis amenities in house are given in following table.

<b>Table-11 Availability of Basic Amenities</b>			
Sr.No	Amenities		Per cent
1	Electricity	23	46
2	TV	10	20
3	Toilet	1	2
4	Bicycle	10	20
5	Bike	4	8
6	Fan	13	26

*Source-Field survey 2012*

It was observed that, tribal person who is financially strong is interested in maintaining good house automatically purchases these items. However tribal people who are financially weak are not able to afford such kind of amenities due to their low economic condition.

## 16.CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The scheduled tribes of Dahod have a long history of struggle. In this region, the main sources of their livelihood are agriculture and forest. Not a single activity ensures to provide sufficient income for their livelihood completely. In fact, the small size of land holdings by tribal people and low productivity are the root causes of diversified occupations. Agriculture in this region is mainly based on rain fed and mono-cropped

but double cropping (Kharif and Rabi) is also regular practice of a highest number of tribal farmers. At some places third crop is also growing due to availability of adequate irrigation facilities. As a result, there is greater contribution on wheat and vegetable and thus, food security is ensured from five to seven months in a year. It is clear that, agriculture is an important livelihood source for tribal people in Dahod district. Nearly 95 percent of tribal populations are engaged in this sector. In the study area land holding variation are not found much and majority of tribal's have not more than 6 Guntha of land from which they can earns an income of ₹1500 /- per Guntha. This income is not sufficient for their subsistence livelihood. A couple numbers of tribal are migrating to other regions for getting employment and income sources in off season.

The study has found that the greater market orientation of commodities like mango, guava, banana, amla, etc. Almost 62 percent of female workers are still engaged in the agricultural and allied activities cum forest-based economies. Thus, women workers play an important role in overall activities for the survival of their families. No doubt, both Government and NGO policies have brought positive impact on agricultural, horticultural and floricultural activities. But from this above analysis, it is clear that, both government and NGOs policies are not giving more emphasize on related activities in allied sector like fisheries etc and the multiple or additional income can't be generated by tribal people.

Due to degradation of environment and the intervention of non-tribal, they face problems and challenges to secure a sustainable livelihood opportunities and a gracious life. As a result a number of NGOs are involved in order to ensure women's empowerment, women productivity, and effective participation in agro-based activities. VanitaMahilaSatsang a non-government organization which is also taking an initiative to provide an alternative education to tribal women for cultivation of medical plants which helps to secure livelihood opportunities and secure biodiversity. Thus, agro-forestry plays an effective role in the proper utilization of the natural resources in a most effective and efficient manner for sustainable crop production and socio-economic upliftment with livelihood opportunities & health security and employment & income generation within the tribal economy. It has helped to reduce the poverty and migration rate of the district.

Most of tribal people are still not conscious about higher education, and medical facilities. Their income level is so low that they are unable to avail these facilities. It was also noticed, that some tribal people of remote villages are getting basic health facilities by government schemes. Female literacy rate is very poor as compared of male literacy rate. It can be noted, 70 percent of female are found to be illiterate in this region. The literacy rate is quite less than state average; it was 45 percent against of 62 percent of total. The dropout rate is not that much and the enrollment of children in primary school is praiseworthy. Various government programmes like; mid-day meal programme, kanyaKelvaniRath, Katurba Gandhi ValikaVidyalaya scheme all have been implemented at grass root level. The children have been instrumented to go to school in the region with the help of various schemes. The social awareness is very poor, even Government and Non-governmental organizations are not giving emphasis on it. Hence, tribes are not aware of education, technology, and agricultural practices and so on. Some NGOs are providing training for modern agricultural practices in Dahod district. But it is not effective due to poor social awareness. It was observed, only 20 percent households have T.V out of 46 percent electrified tribal families.

The Dahod district has got less industrial area. This is lack of small scale or cottage industries like weaving, spinning and sugar industries etc. The idea and use of economic phenomena viz-investment, marketing, and storage are not clear to tribal people. The wage rate is comparatively very low in agricultural sector among the scheduled tribes as compared to the wage rate of generally industrial or any other workers of the state. At present, the transport and communication facilities are praiseworthy. As a result, social awareness of the tribals is gradually increasing. Housing conditions of majority of Tribal people are poor and their houses do not have special rooms or separate arrangement for kitchen, bathroom, toilet etc. It was observed that 92 percent of tribal families have got kachha houses. Drinking water facilities are not adequate and because of inadequate facilities mainly common diseases are found among the scheduled tribes.

The attitude towards saving among the scheduled tribes is not very satisfactory, because most of them are engaged in agricultural field. In that case, Prayas, a non-government organization is working which promotes

better social and economic opportunities with access to financial services and awareness of right and duties. As a result, a few tribal's have started the practice of saving money in banks and other financial institution as a small investment. Human Development Index is very low in term of education attainment and per capita income. It can be noted that the educational attachment index is 0.266 and income index is 0.116 in Dahod district. There is wide variation in educational attainment and per capita income index from other regions of the country.

It is found that, the effect of education and health care interventions of Government and NGOs have not been able to improve of tribal people's education and health status. Due to various schemes / programmes adopted by government, some NGOs are conducting research and training and innovative and effective programmes in the field of education, health, micro finance and income and employment generation activities. These factors have played an important role to eradicate various socio-economic problems of this region. However, the NGOs are making efforts for improvement in promoting and culturally appropriate approaches to improve education and health seeking behavior of STs People. Gradually, these efforts have created a positive impact on the tribal's education and health status in the many parts of the Dahod district.

## **17.SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATION**

To eradicate poverty, the livelihood security is to be needed. In that case, alternative sustainable source of livelihood should be adopted through proper implementation of policies. Forest of the villages must be maintained properly with active participation of tribal women. Different training should be provided for agro based livelihood sources, like mushroom cultivation, vegetable crops, which will support tribal women to be self-reliant and their empowered. The literacy rate of tribal women is very poor as compared to men. So, only formulation of development policies for tribal is not enough. The main attention should be paid to create enough social awareness, which will bring self-reliance among tribal people. Tribal women should also get the opportunities for the leadership training. So, that they become self-confident and empowered.

For tribal development Government programmes should be implemented properly. And for that we need

good governance the various programmes/Schemes are working for the betterment of tribal in Dahod district Tribal people should get proper education to make them conscious about the benefit of various programmes. Health facilities should be properly developed. Infrastructure facilities should be developed so that they can market their product properly. The main attention should be paid to create social awareness, which will bring self-reliance among the tribal people. Dahod is a backward area in terms of many socio-economic criteria. If we want to see the tribal people more prosperous and happy then people, Government and NGOs together have to work properly. In this way a day will come when tribal people in Dahod will get all the benefits which will finally improve their socio-economic condition.

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