



Developmental Gap Among Tribal and Non-Tribal Communities in Jammu and Kashmir, India.

Jahangir Ahmad Lone,¹ Aasif Ali Bhat²

¹Research Scholar, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab

²Assistant Professor, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab

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KEYWORDS

Tribal, non-tribal socio-economic disparity.

ABSTRACT:

Introduction: This study explores the developmental gap between tribal and non-tribal communities in Jammu and Kashmir. Rooted in historical and structural factors such as colonial legacies, displacement, and discrimination, the disparities encompass various aspects, including economic status, access to resources, and basic services. Focusing on four districts, the study empirically examines differences in economic position, assets, sanitation, healthcare, and education, shedding light on the multifaceted challenges faced by tribal communities. The findings highlight the importance of addressing not only economic discrepancies but also preserving cultural identity and heritage for comprehensive and sustainable development.

Objectives: The objective of the present research is to discern developmental distinctions between tribal and non-tribal communities. To achieve this goal, the study has systematically investigated the differences between respondents belonging to tribal and non-tribal groups in four districts of Jammu and Kashmir concerning economic status, assets, sanitation facilities, healthcare access, and educational opportunities.

Methods: In this study, descriptive statistics served as the primary methodology for data analysis.

Results: The study's findings indicate that the developmental disparities between tribal and non-tribal communities stem from historical and structural factors, notably colonial legacies, displacement, marginalization, and discrimination. These elements have resulted in uneven access to resources, opportunities, and essential services. Socio-economic challenges, such as limited educational, healthcare, and employment access, are prevalent among tribal communities. The developmental gap is further exacerbated by issues like poverty, insufficient infrastructure, and geographical remoteness. Importantly, the study highlights that the developmental gap extends beyond economic or material differences, encompassing the preservation of cultural identity and heritage. To effectively address this gap, efforts should not only focus on economic aspects but also emphasize the significance of safeguarding indigenous knowledge, languages, and traditional practices, recognizing their integral role in the well-being of tribal communities.

Conclusions: the developmental gap between tribal and non-tribal communities is a complex issue deeply rooted in historical and structural factors such as colonial legacies, displacement, marginalization, and discrimination. This study underscores that these factors have led to significant disparities in access to resources, opportunities, and basic services. It is evident that tribal communities face multifaceted socio-economic challenges, including limited access to education, healthcare, and employment opportunities, exacerbated by factors like poverty, insufficient infrastructure, and geographical remoteness. Moreover, the developmental gap is not merely an economic or material disparity; it extends to the preservation of cultural identity and heritage. Recognizing the importance of indigenous knowledge, languages, and traditional practices is crucial for holistic efforts aimed at bridging the developmental gap. Future interventions and policies must adopt a comprehensive approach that addresses both the economic and cultural dimensions, ensuring the well-being and sustainable development of tribal communities



1. Introduction

Developmental gaps among tribal and non-tribal groups or population are heavily influenced by geographic coverage. It is vital to identify "Tribal" and "Non-Tribal" to examine the disparities between them. The issue of what constitutes a "Tribal" or "Non-Tribal" group is not new. People are aware of whether they are tribal or not, but researchers, politicians, and demographers are not satisfied with this perception. Tribal and non-tribal areas are defined very differently depending on the country. Consequently, without any definite agreed-upon definition, it is difficult to compare specific Tribal regions. In Jammu and Kashmir, for example, the official classifications of tribal and non-tribal populations or areas are leftovers from the socialist era and are based on a legal distinction between "Tribal settlements," which are localities that have been granted "non-tribal" status, and "Tribal settlements," which are localities that do not. In the modern world, there is still an increasing gender, racial, and family economic status inequality, an expanding technical split, and disparity in country-to-country economic trends. All efforts to improve productive capacities and maximize resources for productive outputs face increasing obstacles due to this diversity. Sustainable development would be much more likely to be accomplished with a stable global population. On the other hand, a high rate of population growth necessitates more food and social services like employment, training, and education as well as better health and leisure, and when these needs are not met, a drop in the standard of living frequently occurs (Fien, 2016). The growing wealth disparity breeds unsustainable behavior. The wealthy continue to abuse resources, leaving the poor unprotected extravagantly. Additionally, the idea that the indigenous population's lack of growth resulted from their seclusion won out. The claim that inadequate resources are allocated for tribal development is frequently made after this (Xaxa, 2014). The current study aims to identify developmental differences between tribal and non-tribal populations. Therefore, it has empirically examined the disparity between tribal and non-tribal respondents from four Districts of Jammu and Kashmir regarding the economic position, assets, sanitation facility, healthcare facility, and education.

2. Objectives

The current study aims to identify developmental differences between tribal and non-tribal populations. Therefore, it has empirically examined the disparity between tribal and non-tribal respondents from four Districts of Jammu and Kashmir regarding the economic position, assets, sanitation facility, healthcare facility, and education.

Methods

In this study, descriptive statistics served as the primary methodology for data analysis. Descriptive statistics involve the systematic and quantitative summary of essential features within a dataset, providing a clear and concise overview of its central tendencies, variability, and distribution. Through the use of measures such as mean, median, mode, standard deviation, and graphical representations like histograms or box plots, the researchers were able to organize and present the key characteristics of the collected data. This methodological approach allowed for a comprehensive exploration of the dataset, facilitating a deeper understanding of the patterns and trends inherent in the variables under investigation. Descriptive statistics thus played a crucial role in elucidating the fundamental aspects of the study, contributing to the interpretation and communication of the findings.

Results of the study

Economic status

A ration card is an important document issued by the state government to households that entitles them to purchase essential food items at subsidized rates from the Public Distribution System (PDS) or Fair Price Shops (FPS). Ration cards are classified into different categories based on the economic status of the household, and the benefits and entitlements vary accordingly. As of September 2021, the Jammu and Kashmir government had a well-established Public Distribution System in place to ensure food security for its residents. The ration card types in Jammu and Kashmir include:

Above Poverty Line (APL) Ration Card: Issued to households that do not fall under the poverty line criteria. APL cardholders are eligible for purchasing food grains



Table. 1 developmental gap			
	Tribal Respondents (in %)	Non-Tribal Respondents (in %)	Sig. (2-tailed)
Economic status			
Ration Card			0.00
Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY)	47.30%	3.00%	
Priority Household (PHH)	23.90%	5.20%	
Below Poverty Line (BPL)	26.80%	19.60%	
Above Poverty Line (APL)	1.90%	72.20%	
Assets			
Piped water			0.00
Yes	35.30%	97.00%	
No	64.70%	3.00%	
Latrine			0.00
Yes	27.50%	100.00%	
No	72.50%	0%	
Computer/Laptop			0.00
Yes	12.30%	50.80%	
No	87.70%	49.20%	
Mobile phone			0.00
Yes	67.10%	97.90%	
No	32.90%	2.10%	
Main source of light			0.00
Not electricity(mains)	21.00%	100.00%	
Electricity	79.00%	0%	
Primary source of cooking			0.00
Stove	0%	4.30%	
chula	0%	62.10%	
Gas chula	97.30%	33.60%	
Induction Stove	2.70%	0%	
Medical care facility in your locality			0.00
Yes	19.80%	97.30%	
No	80.20%	2.70%	
Distance for medical facility			0.00
Less than 1 KM	18.10%	81.30%	
1-5 KM	16.90%	15.50%	
5-10 KM	31.20%	3.20%	
10-15 KM	32.60%	0%	
More than 15 KM	1.20%	0%	
Educational institutions in your area			0.00
Yes	42.50%	94.50%	
No	57.50%	5.50%	
Distance of education institution			0.00
Less than 1 KM	27.50%	94.10%	
1-5 KM	17.60%	5.00%	
5-10 KM	20.00%	0.90%	
10-15 KM	25.80%	0%	
More than 15 KM	8.90%	0%	

and
other



essential commodities from FPS at non-subsidized rates. Below Poverty Line (BPL) Ration Card: Issued to households that meet the poverty line criteria set by the government. BPL cardholders are eligible for purchasing food grains and other essential commodities from FPS at subsidized rates. Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) Ration Card: This card is issued to the most economically vulnerable households. AAY cardholders receive additional benefits compared to BPL cardholders. Priority Household (PHH) Ration Card: This category might have been applicable to specific situations, providing priority in the allocation of certain food items.

Table 1 demonstrates that 47 percent of respondents from the tribal population have Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) ration cards, compared to 3 percent of the non-tribal population when we first tried to look at the economic position of STs or non-tribes. Priority Household (PHH) ration cards were held by 5.0% of non-tribal respondents and 23.90% of tribal respondents. In terms of respondents with a Below Poverty Line (BPL) ration card, tribal respondents make up 26.80 percent of the total, compared to non-tribal respondents who make up 19.60 percent. People who fall under the PHH and AAY categories are considered to be impoverished. Only 1.90 percent of respondents from the tribal community had an APL ration card, compared to 72.20 percent of non-tribal respondents.

Asset, sanitation, and access to safe drinking water

There are 892 million people who still use open defecation worldwide. Inequities frequently have a regional focus, and rural, poor, and vulnerable households have particularly limited access to basic facilities. Disadvantaged populations are disproportionately impacted by inadequate access, but women and girls suffer the most from poor access to Water and sanitation facilities. The revised 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development establishes targets for 2030 that build upon and surpass the Millennium Development Goals and was adopted by more than 150 world leaders in 2015. (MDGs). By 2030, SDG 6 seeks to "ensure the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all" (UN Water, 2018). Half of the population without sustainable access to clean water was one of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) targets (Fukuda et al., 2019). To completely grasp sustainable development, water and health have once

more risen on the international policy agenda (Cook, 2016). People without access to clean drinking water continue contributing to ailments like nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and stomach pain (Medema et al., 2003). Only 3.0 % of respondents who belong to the non-tribal population do not have a piped water facility, compared to 64.70 percent of respondents from tribal respondents who do not have a clean drinking water facility or a piped water connection to their homes. All non-tribal respondents have latrine facilities close to their dwellings, compared to 72 percent of tribal respondents who don't. Regarding technology, the study's findings indicate that 87.90 percent of respondents from tribal populations do not own computers or laptops, compared to 50.80% of respondents from non-tribal populations with laptops/computers. 32 percent of respondents from the tribal community do not own a cell phone, compared to 97.90 percent of respondents from the non-tribal population.

Electricity and Source of Cooking

Access to clean cooking fuels and technologies is crucial since dependence on polluting cooking fuels will have serious negative effects on the environment, economic development, and health, particularly for women and children (Stoner et al., 2021). It has been discovered that different populations' choices for household fuel consumption vary according to their level of development (Yongolo et al., 2023). Development experts have been troubled by the connection between energy and poverty for decades (Sah 2006). Since modern economies cannot function without energy, it has been suggested that the usage of energy, particularly more modern forms like electricity, is somehow tied to economic progress (Besant-Jones, 2006). The data in the table 4.1 reveals that, of the 416 respondents from the tribal population, 21% do not have a main electric facility in their homes, compared to all non-tribal respondents who had a main electric facility.

Medical care facility

The growth of social infrastructure, particularly in education and health, reflects the standard of living of the populace in a given area (Kumari & Raman, 2011). Better health is crucial for the process of social development. Greater inputs to resource generation and economic expansion result from healthier populations. Analysis of the relationship between health and



economic growth unequivocally demonstrates a large positive association. According to table 5.1 value for medical care facilities for tribal and non-tribal respondents, 80.20 percent of tribal respondents do not have medical care facilities in their locality, compared to non-tribal respondents, 97.30 percent who have medical care facilities in their locality. Looking at the distance between tribal and non-tribal respondents' medical care facilities, table 1 value shows that for tribal respondents, 32.60 percent have medical care facilities at 10-15 KM distance, 31.20 percent have medical care facilities at 5-10 KM distance, and only 18 percent have medical care facilities in the neighborhood. In the local area, 81.30 percent of non-tribal respondents reported having access to medical facilities.

Education

Education significantly and favorably impacts these development outcomes (Gyimah, 2011). Education is a crucial area of national development since it promotes all-around growth and significantly improves a person's quality of life (Rupavath 2016). Education raises standard of living and has significant positive social effects on both people as well as for society (Ozturk 2008). Health, fertility decisions, children's education, the capacity to create, learn, or adapt new technology to the local environment, as well as the development of institutions and a sense of national identity, are all associated with development outcomes (Gyimah, 2011). Table 5.1 value shows that 57.50% of respondents from tribal respondents do not have educational institutions in their respective locality, while 94% of respondents from tribal respondents have educational institutions within their locality. For the tribal population, 25.80 % of respondents have education institutions at 10-15 KM, and 20% have educational institutions at 5-10 KM. Only 27.50% of respondents from tribal population have educational institutions within their community. Comparing to the non-tribal population 94.10% of respondents have educational facilities within their location or dwellings. This gap is commonly observed in various socio-economic indicators and can be attributed to a combination of historical, geographical, political, and socio-cultural factors. Some of the key factors contributing to the developmental gap are as follows:

Geographical and Infrastructure Challenges: Many tribal areas in Jammu and Kashmir are located in remote

and difficult-to-reach regions, which hampers access to basic services like healthcare, education, and transportation. The lack of proper infrastructure in these areas can limit economic opportunities and development.

Economic Disparities: Tribal populations in Jammu and Kashmir often rely on traditional livelihoods like agriculture, pastoralism, and forest-based activities. These traditional economies might face challenges due to changes in land use, climate variability, and market integration. In contrast, non-tribal populations may have access to a more diverse range of economic opportunities.

Educational Disparities: The literacy rates and educational attainment levels among tribal communities are often lower compared to non-tribal populations. Limited access to quality education and lack of educational infrastructure in tribal areas can contribute to this gap.

Healthcare and Nutrition: Tribal populations may face challenges in accessing adequate healthcare facilities and nutrition, leading to poorer health outcomes compared to non-tribal populations.

Social Discrimination and Exclusion: Historically, tribal communities have experienced social discrimination and exclusion, which can have long-lasting effects on their socio-economic status and development.

Land Rights and Forest Governance: Land rights and forest governance issues can impact tribal communities' access to natural resources, affecting their livelihoods and overall development.

Government Policies: The implementation of government policies and developmental programs may not effectively reach and benefit tribal populations due to various administrative and logistical challenges.

Addressing the developmental gap between tribal and non-tribal groups in Jammu and Kashmir requires a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach. It involves targeted policies and programs aimed at improving educational opportunities, healthcare access, infrastructure development, livelihood opportunities, and addressing socio-economic disparities. Ensuring equitable distribution of resources and empowering tribal communities to participate in decision-making processes



are crucial steps towards reducing the developmental gap and promoting inclusive growth in the region.

Conclusion

The developmental gap between tribal and non-tribal communities is often rooted in historical and structural factors such as colonial legacies, displacement, marginalization, and discrimination. These factors have contributed to disparities in access to resources, opportunities, and basic services. Tribal communities often face socio-economic challenges like limited access to education, healthcare, and employment opportunities. Poverty, lack of infrastructure, and geographical remoteness can further exacerbate the developmental gap. The developmental gap should not solely be seen as an economic or material disparity. It also includes the preservation of cultural identity and heritage. Efforts to bridge the gap should consider the importance of preserving indigenous knowledge, languages, and traditional practices, as they are integral to the well-being of tribal communities. Bridging the developmental gap requires targeted policies and interventions that address the specific needs and aspirations of tribal populations. It is important to involve tribal communities in designing and implementing these strategies to ensure their active participation and ownership.

Addressing the developmental gap requires a holistic approach that considers various dimensions of development, including education, healthcare, livelihoods, land rights, governance, and cultural preservation. It is crucial to recognize the interconnectedness of these factors and develop comprehensive interventions that address them simultaneously. Empowering tribal communities and fostering their self-determination is essential to bridge the developmental gap. This involves supporting their agency, providing opportunities for capacity building, and ensuring their meaningful participation in decision-making processes that affect their lives and resources.

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