

TRIBES AND THEIR FARMING SYSTEM IN THE STATE OF J&K

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"The real test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much, it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little" (Roosevelt)

The term Tribal has been described as "Territorial communities living in the relative population of hills and forests. The comparative isolation in some ways has kept them apart from the mainstream of society in the country. They characterized by lack of historical depth partly because of their isolation and partly because of their limited worldview. They are integrated in terms of certain themes rooted in the past. These integrative themes, and a special culture focus, gives them a separate cultural identity, and they often possess latent or motivational systems which are markedly different from those of other people".

The largest concentration of Tribal anywhere in the world except in Africa is in Asia. Tribal communities form 8% of Indian population. The Govt. of India through various legislative and economic measures is trying hard for the uplift and assimilation of these neglected groups into the mainstream of Indian life.

If we will look at the Tribal situation more closely, we find that much remains to be done. Some communications are for advanced but there are still others who have not taken even the first step and are in the stage of food gathering and hunting.

Considering the general socio-economic features tribal have their own socio-cultural and economic problems, which are acting as hindrance to there development.

A number of special programmes are being implemented for Tribal development in India. Through some changes in Tribal economy are very much in evidence yet the efforts have not been

sufficient to solve the basic problems of poverty and exploitation to provide the basic minimum needs to these neglected sections of population.

A brief resume of developmental efforts would highlight the phases of Tribal advancement.

Rao & Reddy (1997), has focussed on the pre-independence situation regarding the position of Tribal in India and adds that it was of an ominous character, which amounted to an administratively enforced alienation from the rest of the country.

The 5th plan introduced a new concept in Tribal development programme. This concept emphasized the initiation of specific plans for specific Tribal areas.

Tribal sub plans are running in different states, in fact Tribal sub plan is the total efforts for all round growth of Tribals and has four main sources to help implement the programmes. These are as:

1. State plan sector outlay.
2. Efforts of central ministers.
3. Institutional finance.

In the interest of tribals, the Govt. of India has increased amount of the budget from Rs. 810 Crores in 2000-2001 to Rs. 1040 Crores in 2001-2002. Apart from this, the Ministry is also working on effective and extensive implementation of Tribal Sub-Plan during the Tenth Five-Year Plan through State Govt. and Voluntary Agencies.

SPREAD OF DIFFERENT INDIAN TRIBES: -

The Indian Tribes have been distributed widely in India. There are several tribes in their varying stages of development. Such as primitive, isolated, hunting food gathering like Andaman and Nikobar Island to predominated agriculturalised group like Bhils, Gonda and Gaddi with varying socio-economic heritage.

The following table would give an account of different. Indian tribes and their specific location in different states.

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Table 1. Different Indian Tribes

S. No.	Name	Location	State
1.	Akughmaria	Akughmar	M.P.
2.	Bhariya	Ghindware	M.P.
3.	Hill Karkas	Raighad/Sarguja	M.P.
4.	Baiga	Mandla	M.P.
5.	Gonds, Halta	Baster	M.P.
6.	Bondo	Koraput	Orissa
7.	Gadaka	Koraput	Orissa
8.	Hill Kharia	Singhthum	Bihar
9.	Paharia	Parghana	Bihar
10.	Birhor	Santhal	Bihar
11.	Gojjar	Anantnag/Kupwada	J&K
12.	Bakirwal	Anantnag/Kupwada	J&K

Source: Sharma, B.D. (1976), "The Valley of Kashmir"

The assimilation of these widely spread groups into mainstream of Indian life has always remained a challenging problem. In spite of legislative and developmental efforts and massive economic measures under taken by the Govt. of India since independence.

National Institute of rural development (1975) summary report Tribal development (1976) and Tribal development action plan (1977) have clearly pointed out that Tribal development depends upon agriculture development of respective Tribal pocket. They further added that although the overall production in the country has gone up, the impact has not been uniform under various farming systems and with different categories of farmers specially the Tribal farmers.

There is hardly any detailed literature on farming systems of Tribal areas and extent and their adoption of agriculture technologies except some studies on shifting cultivation.

Therefore an urgent and deeper probe is needed into the Tribal farming systems, in the state of J&K; keeping in view the following objectives.

1. To examine the socio-cultural setting of Tribal communities.
2. To study the Tribal farming system.

METHODOLOGY

For any social research involving farmers as the unit direct two way communication between the researcher and the respondents is a must to achieve rapport and to ensure free and frank expression of respondents. Keeping in view the investigators own state namely "Jammu & Kashmir" was selected for the purpose of this study. The same criterion was kept in mind while selecting the district Anantnag out of the two tribal districts of J&K.

In district Anantnag, Mattan block was selected because of large concentration of Tribals as compared to other blocks. A sample of 10% villages of Mattan block 3 villages viz. Walenagbal, Halwan and Haputnar were selected randomly out of 30 villages.

The study is based on 60 respondents selected randomly from the pooled list of the tribal farmers of all the 3 villages with the restriction that 20 cases be selected out of three sub-categories of the farmers i.e., small (0-3 hectare), medium (3-6 hectare) and large (above 6 hectare).

So far as the data collection is concerned both primary and secondary data was collected and put for detailed analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Family Composition :

Table 2. Number of family members in small, medium and large category Tribal farmers.

S. No.	Family members	No. of Respondents							
		Small		Medium		Large		Overall	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1.	Upto 5 members	5	25	7	35	11	55	23	38.33
2.	Above 5 members	15	75	13	65	9	45	37	61.67
Total		20	100	20	100	20	100	60	100

The above table reveals that the overall majority of the respondent's i.e. 61.67% are having above five (5) members, while the overall percentage of upto 5 members is 38.33.

The size of family has inverse correlation with size of farm and majority of them believes in joint family system.

Education :

Table 3. Educational background of the Tribal farmers

S. No.	Level of education	No. of Respondents							
		Small		Medium		Large		Overall	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1.	Illiterate	13	65	10	50	2	25	28	46.66
2.	Can read only	3	15	3	15	6	30	12	20.00
3.	Primary	2	10	3	15	4	20	9	15.00
4.	Middle	2	10	4	20	5	25	11	18.34
5.	High school	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6.	Graduate	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total		20	100	20	100	20	100	60	100

The above table shows that majority of respondents i.e. 46.66% are illiterate followed by 20% who can read only and 15% of respondents

were having only primary education. In case of small farmers 65% respondents were illiterate and this state of affair goes on decreasing with increase

in farm size. None of the family member in any size group was found educated above high school standard.

Size of Holding:

Table 4. Size of holding of the Tribal farmers in study area

Farm size group	Average size (ha)	Size of holding (ha)	No. of Respondents							
			Small		Medium		Large		Overall	
			No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Small	1.49	0-1	7	35	-	-	-	-	7	11.66
		1-2	11	55	-	-	-	-	11	18.33
		2-3	2	10	-	-	-	-	2	3.33
Medium	4.43	3-4	-	-	5	25	-	-	5	8.34
		4-5	-	-	9	45	-	-	9	15.00
		5-6	-	-	6	30	-	-	6	10.00
Large	7.39	6-7	-	-	-	-	10	50	10	16.66
		7-8	-	-	-	-	5	25	5	8.34
		8-9	-	-	-	-	3	15	3	5.1
		9-10	-	-	-	-	2	10	2	3.33
	4.49		20	100	20	100	20	100	60	100

The above table reveals majority of respondents i.e. 18.33% are having 1-2 ha. size of holding followed by 16.66% of respondents having

size of holding 6-7ha.. The average size of holding is 1.49, 4.43 and 7.39 hectares in small, medium and large farms and majority of them owns land below 2 hectares.

Cropping Pattern and Cropping Intensity :

Table 5. Cropping Pattern and Cropping Intensity

Crop	Small		Medium		Large		Overall	
	Area (ha)	%	Area (ha)	%	Area (ha)	%	Area (ha)	%
Kharif :								
Paddy	0.25	16.78	1.25	28.21	1.80	24.36	1.10	24.83
Maize	1.05	70.47	2.75	62.08	4.75	67.27	2.85	64.33
Vegetables	0.19	12.75	0.43	9.71	0.84	11.37	0.48	10.84
Sub-total	1.49	100	4.43	100	7.39	100	4.43	100
Rabi :								
Mustard	0.25	21.01	1.25	31.80	1.80	26.12	1.10	27.57
Oats	0.75	63.02	2.25	57.25	4.25	61.69	2.41	60.40
Vegetables	0.19	15.97	0.43	10.95	0.84	12.19	0.48	12.00
Sub-total	1.19	100	3.93	100	6.89	100	3.99	100
Total cropped area	2.68		8.36		14.28		8.42	
Net cultivated area	1.49		4.43		7.39		4.44	
Cropping intensity	179.86%		188.71%		193.23%		190%	

The table reveals that in Kharif crops, maize tops its share with 64.33% and next paddy with 24.83% and vegetables a very little share. In case of small farmers 70.47% area is under maize and 16.78% under paddy and 12.75% under vegetables while in medium farmers 62.08% area were under maize and 28.21% under paddy and 9.71% under vegetables. In case of large farmers 64.27% area is under maize and 24.36% under paddy and 11.39% under vegetables.

In Rabi season maximum area i.e. 60.40% is under oats followed by 27.57% under mustard and 12.03% under vegetables. In case of small farmers 63.02% is under oats and 21.01% under mustard and 12.75% under vegetables. In case of medium farmers 57.25% area is under oats followed by 31.80% under mustard and 10.95% under vegetables. In large farmers 61.69% area is under oats followed by 26.12% under mustard and 12.19% of area under vegetables.

The overall cropping intensity is quite satisfactory i.e. 190.00%. The cropping intensity in case of small farmers is 179.86% followed by 188.71% in medium and 193.2% in case of large farm size groups.

Thus, from the ongoing discussion it may be concluded that major area under study is rainfed, which help the farmers in maize cultivation.

Income Source :

Table 6. Income source of small, medium and large Tribal farmers.

S. No.	Income source	No. of Respondents							
		Small		Medium		Large		Overall	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1.	Agriculture	14	70	16	80	17	85	47	78.34
2.	Forest product	3	15	2	10	3	15	8	13.34
3.	Farm labour	1	5	-	-	-	-	1	1.66
4.	Dairy labour	2	10	2	10	-	-	4	6.66
5.	Any other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total		20	100	20	100	20	100	60	100

The table no.6 indicates that majority of respondents i.e. 78.34% are having agriculture as their main source of income and 13.34% respondents are depend on forest products and the rest are farm labour having dairy and poultry as their main source of income.

Irrigation Potentiality :

Table9. Farm Irrigation Potentiality (ha.)of different size of Tribal farmers.

S. No	Type	Average holding size in (hectare) of different categories							
		Small		Medium		Large		Overall	
		Area	%	Area	%	Area	%	Area	%
1.	Irrigated	0.44	29.53	1.68	37.92	2.64	35.73	1.58	35.67
2.	Unirrigated	1.05	70.47	2.75	62.08	4.75	64.27	2.86	64.33
Total		1.49	100	4.43	100	7.39	100	4.44	100

The above table reveals that the overall 64.33% area was unirrigated and only 35.67% area was found under irrigation. Percent area under irrigation goes on increasing with the increase in farm size.

Thus it is evident from the foregoing discussion

Religious Belief :

Table 7. Religious belief of small, medium and large Tribal farmers.

S. No.	Speci- fication	No. of Respondents							
		Small		Medium		Large		Overall	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1.	Not present	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2.	Marginally	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3.	Present	3	15	4	20	6	30	13	21.66
4.	Important	1	5	2	10	4	20	7	11.66
5.	Quite important	16	80	14	70	10	50	40	66.68
Total		20	100	20	100	20	100	60	100

The above table reveals that tribal community has deep rooted in religious faith as majority of respondent i.e. 66.88% was of this opinion. No case was reported in first two categories, which are not having faith in religion.

Communication Source :

Table 8. Use of information sources of Tribal farmers.

S. No	Informat- ion source	No. of Respondents							
		Small		Medium		Large		Overall	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1.	Personal localite	16	80	14	70	10	50	40	66.66
2.	Personal cosmopolite	-	-	-	-	2	10	2	3.34
3.	Mass media	4	20	6	30	8	40	18	30
Total		20	100	20	100	20	100	60	100

The table no.8 reveals that majority of respondent's i.e. 66.66% got the information through personal localite and almost similar pattern was observed within different farm size groups.

that majority of the area is unirrigated indicating low irrigation potentiality in the area.

The table reveals that 45% farmers have very poor knowledge of improved farm practices. Moreover, the results show that this knowledge increases with the increase in farm size.

Knowledge Index :

Table 10. Knowledge index of adopted in Tribal farmers regarding package of improved practices adopted in paddy crop

S. No	Category	No. of Respondents							
		Small		Medium		Large		Overall	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1.	Good	3	15	4	20	12	60	19	31.66
2.	Fair	13	65	12	60	2	10	14	23.34
3.	Poor	13	65	12	60	2	10	27	45
Total		20	100	20	100	20	100	60	100

CONCLUSION

Recent reports and few studies have pointed out that Tribals have started settled farming in certain pockets but there is hardly any literature on the farming system of Tribal areas and extent of adoption of agriculture technologies except some literature on shifting cultivation. Thus, there is an urgent need for deeper probe into the Tribal farming system, extent to which the agriculture technology is being used by them and technological gaps operating there in.

The overall analysis has pointed out that Tribal communities are highly traditional guided by religious beliefs, guided by religious leadership pattern.

Analysis has indicated that poor education leads to social participation in Tribal areas this suggest for formed programmes to promote these concepts. The most presiding problem which need attention is to promote institutional credits in Tribal pockets to avoid the exploitation of Tribals by local moneylenders.

Thus tribal area from viewpoint of socio-economic development requires: -

1. The efficient and honest extension staff having genuine interest and sense of dedication should be deployed in the Tribal areas.
2. Concrete measures must be taken to eradicate illiteracy by establishing maximum number of schools, award of scholarship, reservation of seats, relaxation of age limit for admission and more necessarily Tribal teachers should be appointed in Tribal schools.
3. Co-operatives and Panchayats must be strengthened and re-activated by covering more fields of entire business live supply of credit, training system, marketing, distribution of inputs and loans.
4. Genetically improved varieties, fertilizer, weedicides & pesticides and intensive irrigation facilities should be made at subsidised rates to the tribal farmers.

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