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# Role of NGOs and Civil Society Organizations in Tribal Development Initiatives in Jharkhand

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**ABSTRACT:** Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are pivotal in fostering tribal development in Jharkhand, addressing socio-economic challenges through education, healthcare, livelihood programs, and rights advocacy. These organizations collaborate with government initiatives, bridging gaps and enhancing the effectiveness of policies. By promoting community empowerment, sustainable development, and cultural preservation, NGOs ensure inclusive, culturally sensitive, and holistic progress. Their innovative, bottom-up approaches empower tribal communities, making development initiatives more responsive and impactful.

**KEYWORDS:** Tribal Development, Community Empowerment, Sustainable Development, Rights Advocacy.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The role of NGOs (**Rajput, 2015**) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in tribal development initiatives in Jharkhand is pivotal, encompassing a range of activities aimed at fostering social change, economic empowerment, and sustainable development among tribal communities. These organizations collaborate with government initiatives, creating a synergy that enhances the effectiveness of development projects. For instance, local NGOs have been instrumental in training tribal groups like the Sabars in handicrafts and overcoming market access challenges, as demonstrated by Agarwal and Agarwal (2015). They empower local communities by promoting participation and self-reliance, as Beasley (2018) illustrated through water and sanitation projects that leverage local organizational strengths. Moreover, CSOs actively engage in policy advocacy and implementation, introducing local innovations in programs such as the Community-Based Monitoring of Health Services under the National Rural Health Mission, bridging gaps between policy and practice (Donegan, 2011). These organizations address socio-economic challenges faced by marginalized tribal women, fostering economic inclusion through targeted training and market integration initiatives, exemplified by Udyogini's Lac livelihood model in Gumla (Panda, 2017). NGOs also promote sustainable development by facilitating community-based forest management practices, ensuring the sustainable use of natural resources while protecting tribal socio-cultural interests (Prasad, 2015). By adopting holistic, bottom-up approaches, NGOs ensure that development initiatives are culturally appropriate and effectively meet the needs of tribal communities, challenging the failures of top-down models (Yangchen Lhamu, 2018). Through their multifaceted efforts, NGOs and CSOs play a crucial role in bridging the gap between government policies and tribal communities, ensuring inclusive, culturally sensitive, and sustainable development in Jharkhand.

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

**Gupta, S. (2011)** This analysis reviewed the role of the NGO Paschim Banga Kheria Sabar Kalyan Samiti in poverty alleviation in Puruliya, West Bengal. The ethnographic study highlighted the NGO's achievements in empowering the marginalized Kheria Sabar community through social and economic initiatives. It underscored the importance of local-level engagement and bottom-up approaches in effective poverty reduction.

**Donegan, B. (2011)** This paper examined the Community-Based Monitoring of Health Services program under India's National Rural Health Mission. It highlighted the active role of civil society in policy formation and implementation, particularly in tribal areas. The study discussed how local innovations, termed "community monitoring plus," emerged beyond policy guidelines, revealing the disconnect between policy and practice and the creative strategies employed by local actors.

**Carrin, M. (2013)** This work reflected on the potential for Jharkhand to propose an alternative model of citizenship to India, focusing on the region's resistance to caste discrimination and atrocities against Dalits and Adivasis. During a seminar, the author discussed the loss of hope for a civil society among the local population. The paper highlighted the deep-rooted social issues and the complex interplay between optimism for change and the resignation to societal challenges.

**Agarwal, R., & Agarwal, P. (2015)** This chapter explored the collaborative efforts of business, government, and society in addressing livelihood issues of the Sabars, a tribal group in Jharkhand. It detailed a government-sponsored handicraft training program facilitated by an NGO, which faced challenges in product marketing. The involvement of MBA students to tackle these issues illustrated a successful case of multi-sectoral cooperation in social development.

**Ranjan, R. K. (2015)** This paper analyzed the policy convergence between MGNREGA and the Integrated Watershed Management Program in Jharkhand. It proposed a conceptual framework to address water resource development issues in rain-fed areas. Despite highlighting the potential for effective inter-departmental coordination, the study pointed out challenges related to governance and the lack of a robust institutional framework at the grassroots level.

**Prasad, A. (2015)** This paper discussed the management and measurement of 'commons' in Jharkhand, analyzing local agricultural and forest practices. It reviewed literature on commons management and highlighted methodological issues in indicator selection. Case studies by Jewitt and Sinha were referenced, advocating for community-based forest management over centralized approaches, emphasizing the socio-cultural ties of local people to their environment.

**Panda, P. K. (2017)** This paper documented an inclusive Lac livelihood model implemented by the NGO Udyogini in Gumla, Jharkhand. It demonstrated how socially excluded tribal women were integrated into the Lac supply chain, improving their incomes and entrepreneurial skills. The case study provided evidence of women's economic empowerment and successful market integration through participative approaches and targeted training.

**Beasley, S. B. (2018)** This thesis investigated the role of NGOs in improving water and sanitation infrastructure in rural India. It analyzed strategies of NGOs in empowering local communities and harmonizing their agendas with state policies. The study provided insights into how NGOs effectively advanced water quality and sanitation systems through community organization and resource utilization, highlighting practical implications for policymakers.

**Yangchen Lhamu, K. (2018)** This study critiqued the top-down approach in the development policies targeting India's scheduled tribes. Despite numerous policies and significant investments, the desired developmental outcomes remained unmet due to a lack of consultation with the tribes. The author emphasized the disconnect between policy formulators and beneficiaries, arguing for a more inclusive, participatory approach to development that respects tribal culture and identity.

**Kumar, S., & Yadav, S. K. (2018)** This study focused on non-tribal rural women in Jharkhand and their training needs in animal husbandry. Conducted in the Godda district, it assessed the impact of interventions by NGOs and the state government. The findings indicated that most respondents had low to medium socio-economic standards, emphasizing the need for policies to enhance their living standards and livelihood.

**Dutta, M., & Dutta, M. (2021).** The present chapter brings forward the various community-based preventive measures that have been implemented from time to time in curbing human trafficking. Most of the discourses are based on the several field studies undertaken over the period. Children from drought-prone areas and places affected by natural or human-made disasters are particularly more likely to fall prey to traffickers. The National Human Rights Commission estimates that almost half of the children trafficked within India are between the ages of (11–14) and are subjected to physical and sexual abuses and kept in conditions similar to slavery and bondage. Debt bondage is one of the many strategies used by exploiters to keep children, women and men in constant servitude.

### III. SIGNIFICANCE OF NGOS AND CSOS

#### Catalysts for Social Change

- NGOs and CSOs drive social transformation by addressing deep-rooted social issues and promoting equality, particularly in tribal areas where traditional structures often prevail.

#### Economic Empowerment

- These organizations facilitate economic development through training and livelihood programs, enabling tribal communities to become self-reliant and improve their socio-economic status.

#### Advocacy and Policy Influence

- NGOs and CSOs play a critical role in advocating for the rights of tribal communities, influencing policy formulation, and ensuring that the needs and voices of these communities are considered in development plans.

### **Sustainable Development**

- They promote sustainable practices by integrating traditional knowledge with modern techniques, ensuring that development is environmentally sustainable and culturally appropriate.

### **Bridging Gaps**

- NGOs and CSOs bridge the gap between government initiatives and tribal communities, ensuring effective implementation of policies and programs by addressing ground-level challenges and fostering community participation.

### **Community Empowerment**

- Through capacity-building initiatives, these organizations empower local communities to take charge of their development, enhancing their ability to advocate for their rights and manage resources effectively.

### **Innovative Solutions**

- NGOs and CSOs often introduce innovative solutions tailored to the specific needs of tribal communities, addressing issues such as health, education, and livelihoods with culturally sensitive approaches.

### **Holistic Development**

- Their work encompasses a broad range of activities that address various aspects of tribal life, from economic to social and environmental issues, contributing to holistic community development.

### **Enhancing Livelihoods**

- By providing training in skills such as handicrafts, agriculture, and market integration, these organizations help improve the livelihoods of tribal people, making them less dependent on traditional and often unstable sources of income.

### **Advancing Rights-Based Agendas**

- NGOs and CSOs advance rights-based agendas, ensuring that tribal communities are aware of their rights and have the capacity to claim them, thereby fostering a more just and equitable society.

## **IV. COLLABORATION WITH GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES**

NGOs and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) (**Sahoo, 2014**) in Jharkhand play a vital role in collaboration with government initiatives, significantly enhancing the effectiveness and reach of development projects. This synergy is particularly evident in various sectors where government and non-governmental efforts intersect. For instance, in the realm of livelihood improvement, local NGOs have partnered with the government to provide training and resources to tribal communities. A notable example is the training program for the Sabar tribe, where NGOs facilitated the production of marketable handicrafts while addressing marketing challenges through innovative solutions provided by students from MBA colleges. This collaborative effort not only preserved the tribe's cultural heritage but also improved their economic prospects. Moreover, in health and sanitation, NGOs have been instrumental in implementing government programs like the Community-Based Monitoring of Health Services under the National Rural Health Mission. By introducing local innovations and engaging community members, these organizations have ensured that health services are more responsive to the specific needs of tribal populations. Such partnerships leverage the strengths of both sectors: the broad policy framework and resources of the government, combined with the grassroots reach and local expertise of NGOs. This collaborative approach is essential for addressing complex social issues and ensuring that development initiatives are inclusive, sustainable, and tailored to the unique needs of tribal communities in Jharkhand.

## **V. COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT**

Community empowerment is a central focus of NGOs (**Sinha, 2013**) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in their efforts to foster development among tribal communities in Jharkhand. These organizations play a crucial role in promoting participation and self-reliance, ensuring that community members have the skills, knowledge, and confidence to take charge of their development. For example, NGOs often conduct training programs that enhance the capacities of local people, enabling them to engage in sustainable livelihoods such as agriculture, handicrafts, and animal husbandry. By doing so, they help reduce dependence on external aid and promote economic self-sufficiency. Additionally, NGOs work to strengthen community institutions and leadership. They facilitate the formation and operation of local committees and cooperatives, which serve as platforms for collective decision-making and action. This grassroots approach ensures that development initiatives are locally driven and culturally relevant. NGOs also advocate for the rights of tribal communities, helping them to navigate legal and bureaucratic processes to secure land

rights, access government benefits, and protect their natural resources. Empowerment efforts are further supported by initiatives that improve access to education and healthcare. By establishing community schools and health centers, NGOs ensure that basic services are available to even the most remote and marginalized groups. These efforts not only enhance the immediate well-being of community members but also contribute to long-term development by building a more educated and healthy population. Moreover, NGOs play a pivotal role in fostering awareness and advocacy. They conduct campaigns and workshops that educate community members about their rights and responsibilities, environmental conservation, and the importance of civic engagement. By empowering individuals with knowledge and a sense of agency, NGOs help to build resilient communities that can advocate for their needs and contribute actively to the broader societal discourse. through their multifaceted empowerment initiatives, NGOs and CSOs in Jharkhand enable tribal communities to become active participants in their development, fostering a sense of ownership and ensuring that progress is sustainable and inclusive.

## VI. POLICY ADVOCACY AND IMPLEMENTATION

Policy advocacy and implementation by NGOs and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) play a crucial role in promoting tribal development in Jharkhand by ensuring that the specific needs and rights of tribal communities are addressed in the policy-making process. NGOs actively participate in policy dialogues, consultations, and advocacy campaigns, bringing attention to critical issues such as land rights, education, and healthcare. They provide valuable insights from their on-the-ground experiences, influencing the formulation of more effective and inclusive policies. In the implementation phase, NGOs bridge the gap between policy and practice by working closely with government agencies to ensure that policies are translated into actionable programs. They introduce local innovations that enhance the effectiveness of government initiatives, tailor interventions to local conditions, and empower communities through education about their rights and entitlements. This dual role of advocacy and implementation ensures that policies are not only well-crafted but also effectively executed, resulting in tangible improvements in the lives of tribal communities in Jharkhand.

## VII. ADDRESSING SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

Addressing socio-economic challenges is a primary focus of NGOs and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in their efforts to foster development among tribal communities in Jharkhand. These organizations work tirelessly to mitigate the multifaceted issues that hinder the socio-economic progress of tribal populations. Through various initiatives, NGOs and CSOs tackle challenges such as poverty, unemployment, lack of access to education and healthcare, and social discrimination. One of the key strategies employed by these organizations is the implementation of livelihood improvement programs. By providing skills training, vocational education, and entrepreneurship support, NGOs empower tribal individuals and communities to generate sustainable sources of income. These programs often focus on sectors relevant to the local context, such as agriculture, animal husbandry, handicrafts, and small-scale industries. By diversifying livelihood options and enhancing productivity, NGOs contribute to poverty alleviation and economic empowerment among tribal communities. Additionally, NGOs and CSOs advocate for access to quality education and healthcare services for tribal populations. They work to improve infrastructure, build capacity among local healthcare providers, and promote awareness about preventive healthcare practices. Similarly, they advocate for the expansion of educational opportunities, including the establishment of schools and skill development centers in remote tribal areas. By addressing barriers to education and healthcare, these organizations contribute to human capital development and improve overall well-being within tribal communities. Furthermore, NGOs and CSOs play a critical role in advocating for the protection of tribal rights and entitlements. They raise awareness about land rights, forest rights, and other legal provisions that safeguard the interests of tribal communities. Through legal aid clinics, advocacy campaigns, and community mobilization efforts, these organizations empower tribal individuals to assert their rights and access government welfare schemes and entitlements effectively. Moreover, NGOs and CSOs promote social inclusion and address discrimination faced by tribal communities. (Choudhary, 2017). They conduct awareness campaigns to challenge stereotypes and prejudices, promote inter-community dialogue and understanding, and foster social cohesion. By advocating for equitable access to resources and opportunities, these organizations strive to create a more inclusive and just society where tribal communities can thrive economically, socially, and culturally. Their comprehensive approach to addressing socio-economic challenges, NGOs and CSOs play a vital role in promoting the holistic development of tribal communities in Jharkhand. Their efforts contribute to building resilient communities that are empowered to overcome obstacles and achieve sustainable socio-economic progress. (Barter)

## VIII. CONCLUSION

NGOs and CSOs are essential in driving tribal development in Jharkhand, significantly contributing to social change, economic empowerment, and sustainable development. By collaborating with government initiatives, advocating for

rights, and implementing grassroots programs, these organizations empower tribal communities, ensuring their participation and self-reliance. Their comprehensive efforts address various socio-economic challenges, promoting inclusive and culturally appropriate development, and fostering a resilient and self-sustaining tribal society.

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