

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF COVID MITIGATION MEASURES: SECURING FUTURES OF PASTORAL TRIBE FOLK'S CHILDREN

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Summary

The issue of marginalisation of tribal children is exacerbated due to an absence of developmental discourse that is based on social-constructionist (Stammers 1993, 1999) and eco-materialist (Foster 2000) perspectives on rights and power. While the Indian government has promoted policy tools that enable tribal groups to represent their interests and become collaborators in the policymaking process, the tribal response to state policy of marketisation and globalisation is nebulous (Agrawal 2005).

The proposed research seeks to unravel the impact of conflict & the Covid pandemic on the nature of child work and education within pastoral Bakkarwal tribes living across the Himalayan Nations in the era of global pandemic. The research shall serve as steerage for future labour policy aiming at empowerment of tribal children on the margins in the Indian sub-continent.

Abstract

Social exclusion discourse has been criticised as inadequate for viewing marginality. In this regard, the notion of differential or 'adverse inclusion' into the state, market or civil society becomes more appropriate to locate marginality or chronic poverty (du Toit 2004). The notion of adverse inclusion becomes useful to analyse how localised livelihood strategies are actuated and deterred by economic, social and political relations both spatially and temporally through unequal power regimes (Hickey & du Toit 2013). The analysis incorporates a gendered form of analysis while deriving from feminist structuralism (Kabeer 1994). The framework is also relevant for discerning changing social relations that drive development within a temporal frame, following trajectories of work duration across 'the developmental cycle' within a wider class analysis to posit the temporal process of 'impoverishment' (Murray 1987).

Scholars have emphasised the significance of 'political ecology' in understanding various forms of struggles involved in controlling natural resources (Jayal 2001), and also in gaining insights into the responses of local actors to the challenges and opportunities posed by global discourses of conservation, environmentalism, sustainability and development (Gupta 2018). Watts (2000) argues that political ecology understands the complex relationship of nature with society through a careful study of 'forms of access and control over resources and their implications for environmental health and sustainable livelihoods'. As a part of political ecology, this research shall analyse the statist notions of environmental conservation and idea of 'sustainable' in work practices amongst children and policies by employing 'eco-materialism' (Foster 2000) along with neo-institutional economics for a comparative advantage over neo-classicism which fails to locate the social within its analytical toolbox.

The researcher shall employ an Institutional Analysis and Development framework (Ostrom in Abitbol and Flechas 2008) to unravel the dialectic between locals and state institutions (Ostrom 2005). The framework would be bolstered with the use of the Conflict Theory (Allan 2011) refined by Lewis Coser to analyse the interplay between class and power affecting work in the border districts. Furthermore, the concept of the political economy of work (Spencer 2009) would aid in the task of analysing the communitarian work practices of the tribe against notions of work in state legislation. An application of such a multi-disciplinary approach would aid in situating research for an understanding which is sensitive to the changing nature of social, political and economic order in regions inhabited by the tribes.

The research would include a critical analysis of constitutional protections afforded to tribes, children, laws on management of forests and property ownership. The research would analyse laws affecting

federal structures & property relations & policies on spatial mobility during the Covid-19 pandemic to determine their impact on the transhumance mode of existence.

The use of multi-regional and sectoral data provided by the Governments and other extra-state agencies on labour practises amongst tribes would be essential for locating the local against the transnational. Using this, one would be able to use comparative methods for a comprehensive understanding of future of pastoral children.

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