

Charting the Journey: The Struggle of the *Katkari* Tribe for Sustainable Livelihood and Socio - Economic Development

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Abstract: *This wide - ranging review delves into the socioeconomic and livelihood trajectories of tribal communities, focusing on the Katkari tribe in Maharashtra, designated as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs). The Katkari face multifaceted challenges in health, education, and livelihoods. With a population of around 1.75 lakh, their traditional occupations, including catechu production and forest - based practices, have declined over the years. The paper scrutinizes the health, education, and overall socio - economic status of the Katkari tribe, highlighting persistent challenges such as malnutrition, lack of educational infrastructure, and limited employment opportunities. It discusses the impact of industrialization on tribal livelihoods, emphasizing issues related to displacement, environmental degradation, and the socio - economic consequences of large - scale development projects. This review paper examines the Katkari tribe's challenges in achieving equity and sustainable development despite existing government schemes. It emphasizes the pivotal role of social movements and non - governmental organizations in advocating for Katkari rights. Acknowledging positive impacts, the review underscores the need for ongoing efforts, policy interventions, and community - centric approaches to empower the Katkari tribe, ensuring their inclusion in the nation's development narrative.*

Keywords: Livelihood, Indigenous Communities, PVTGs,, Socio – Economic, Marginalized communities

1. Introduction

This article provides an overview of the diverse literature highlighting the socio - economic and livelihood trajectories of tribals, particularly *Katkaris*. Among them, the *Katkari* tribe in Maharashtra grapples with issues ranging from health and education to livelihood sustainability. The *Katkari* tribe, designated as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) in Maharashtra, struggling with diverse challenges in achieving sustainable livelihoods. Globally, indigenous populations face extreme poverty, with significant disparities in life expectancy compared to non - tribal communities (Nathaniel Berger et al., n. d.). In India, where Scheduled Tribes (STs) constitute a substantial demographic, the challenges are intricate, and influenced by geographic, economic, and political factors (Virginus Xaxa, 2008). The original engagement of *Katkaris* in forest - based practices like catechu production, hunting, and agriculture, faced significant disruptions post - independence due to environmental policies and shifting agricultural limitations (Dalvi & Bokil, 2000). Forced to relocate, their traditional livelihoods diminished, and they turned to seasonal migration for employment, facing challenges of poverty, illiteracy, and limited contact with modern civilization (Bokil M., 2006; (Sinha, 2017)). This literature review explores the multifaceted challenges encountered by the *Katkari* tribe especially related to their livelihood and examines the role of social movements and organizations in fostering sustainable development.

2. Review of Literature

Tribals in the context of India

The global landscape is home to approximately 370 to 500 million individuals from tribal or indigenous communities

across more than 90 countries (UNDP HDR, 2019). The term "indigenous" is applied to those whose socio - cultural identity distinguishes them from other populations, representing original inhabitants or aboriginals (Rousseleau, 2013; UNDP, HDR, 2019). An International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) report in 2020 revealed that out of the 5% global population, 15% of indigenous people living in tribal areas endure extreme poverty, with a life expectancy of up to 20 years lower than non - tribal populations (Nathaniel Berger et al., n. d., 2020).

In India, the commencement of the Constitution in 1950 led to the categorization of these ethnic groups as Scheduled Tribes (ST), defined under Article 366 (25). Before the establishment of the Indian Republic in 1950, various terms such as 'animist', 'Tribal animist', 'Hill and Forest Tribes', 'Primitive Tribes', and 'Backward Tribes' were used for tribes. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar advocated for the shift from 'Adivasi' to 'Scheduled Tribe', emphasizing its authenticity and legality. This nomenclature aimed at identifying and differentiating groups based on physical features, language, religion, customs, and social organization (Ambagudia, 2007). According to Virginus Xaxa (2008), India harbors over 104 million tribal people, representing one - third of the global tribal population, with 705 ethnic groups spread across 30 states and union territories. The geographical distribution of tribes in India is diverse, with the northeast, northwest, central, eastern, and western regions hosting various tribal communities. The tribal areas encompass 60% of the nation's total forest area. Notably, 51 tribal districts out of 58 with a forest cover exceeding 67% exist, and these regions contain substantial deposits of coal, iron, bauxite, and chromite. Tribal communities account for 40% of those displaced by dams, and violent conflicts involving tribes often have state involvement (Xaxa, 2014). Four prominent tribes – *Bhill*,

Gond, Naga, and Santhal – constitute the majority of Scheduled Tribes in India, spread across 90 districts and 809 blocks, comprising 45% of the scheduled tribe population.

In India, 2.5% of the tribal population falls under Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs), previously termed 'Primitive Tribes.' These groups, comprising 75 out of 705 Scheduled Tribes, are dispersed across 17 states and one Union Territory, occupying approximately 15% of the country's total land area (GoI, Tribal Health Report, 2019). The Ministry of Tribal Affairs oversees Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) in India. Initiated by the Dhebar Commission in 1973, these groups were initially termed Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) under the Scheduled Tribes category, denoting zero or negative population growth and a pre - agricultural lifestyle. The number of PTGs grew to 75 by the eighth Five Year Plan, with Maram in Manipur becoming the last recognized group in 1993–1994. In 2006, the Indian government proposed renaming them Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups, a change officially implemented later. The identification criteria include pre - agricultural technology, poor literacy, economic backwardness, and a static or shrinking population (Annual Report 2021 - 22, GoI, MoTA).

Overview Tribals in Maharashtra:

In Maharashtra, Scheduled Tribes (ST) constitute 9.35% of the total population, with 10, 506, 872 individuals (trti. maharashtra. gov. in). This ST population represents 5.1% of the country's ST population. The distribution across primary divisions reveals varying percentages: Konkan (7.01%), Nashik (23.33%), Pune (2.15%), Aurangabad (3.98%), Amravati (10.87%), and Nagpur (14.42%). The state recognizes 47 STs, including *Bhill, Mahadev Koli, Gond, Warli, and Thakar*, with 19 tribes having a population over a lakh, constituting 80% of the total ST population (trti. maharashtra. gov. in). In Maharashtra's geographical regions, the Sahyadri section, encompassing Raigad and other districts, houses 48% of STs, including *Mahadev Koli and Warli*. The Satpuda region covers districts like Dhule and Aurangabad, with 33% of tribes like *Bhill and Gavit*. The *Gondwana* region, including Chandrapur and Nagpur, has 19% of tribes residing in forested areas like *Gond* and *Korku* (Dongre, M.2010).

Historical Overview of *Katkari*:

Milind Bokil, highlighted the early documentation on *Katkari* life by N. N. Weling (1934) and S. B. Kulkarni (1969), emphasizing their pivotal contributions (Bokil, M., 2006). Notably, during 1873 - 1905, Revharand John Wilson briefly mentioned *Katkari* in 'Aboriginal tribes of Bombay' (1876), and Gazetteer James Campbell provided insights in the Gazette of India (Bokil, M., 2006). Bokil raised critical questions about the *Katkari* tribe's status, societal perception, and developmental aspects, highlighting their transformation from an independent and productive tribe to a marginalized labor class, coining terms like '*Katkari*' to '*Kashtkari*' or '*Katodi*' to '*Kamathi*' (Bokil, M., 2006). He expressed concern over the *Katkari*'s decline, attributing it to societal and governmental indifference, and criticizing the reliability of recent population census data due to misidentifications (Bokil M., 2006). The critique underscores the negative impact of

societal neglect and governmental apathy on the *Katkari* community's well - being and development.

According to recommendations by the Tribal Research and Training Institute (trti. maharashtra. gov. in) Pune, *Katkari, Kolam, and Madia - Gond* are designated as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) in Maharashtra. Criteria include nomadic habits, reliance on hunting, gathering, primitive agriculture, and increasing dependence on forests. In Raigad district, Scheduled Tribes constitute 11.58%, while Pune has 3.70%, with tribes like *Kathodi, Katkari, Mahadev Koli, Dongar Koli, Thakur, and Thakar* residing in both regions. According to the Tribal Research and Training Institute, Pune (trti. maharashtra. gov. in, Renuka Patnaik, 1996), the *Katkari* population was 1.75 lakh in the 1981 Census, with significant concentrations in Raigad, Thane, Ratnagiri, Pune, and Nashik. Raigad, particularly, holds around 44% of the *Katkari* population. Census data from 1961 and 1971 are crucial for accuracy, as the 1981, 1991, and 2001 censuses saw non - tribals identifying as tribals for government benefits (Bokil M., 2006).

The ancestry of the *Katkari* tribe is a subject of controversy, with conflicting theories. Enthoven (1992) suggests their origin in Western Gujarat, living in acacia woodlands, later migrating to the Sahyadris due to the depletion of acacia trees. Campbell (1882, 1883) posits an origin in the Khandesh region. Weling (1934) notes their presence in Raigad and Thane districts in Maharashtra, with some in Gujarat, Nashik, Pune, and Dhule. The name "*Katkari*" stems from their historical association with making catechu from Khair trees (*Acacia catechu*). Listed as a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG), the *Katkari* faced stigma under the Criminal Tribes Act of 1871 (Bokil M., 2002). Historically engaged in various livelihoods, including catechu production, charcoal making, hunting, and agriculture, their forest - based practices declined post - independence due to Khair tree felling bans and restrictions on shifting cultivation by the Forest Department (Dalvi, Bokil, 2000; Grove, Damodaran, Sangwan, 2013). Forced to move seasonally for employment, *Katkari* households began permanent relocation to agricultural fringes in the 1950s, resulting in small hamlets expanding across Raigad and Thane districts, including *Khalapur, Karjat, Pen, and Panvel talukas* (Sathe, 1988; Heredia, Srivastava, 2013).

The Current scenario of *Katkaris* Socio - economic and Livelihood situation:

Family Structure, marriage, and housing pattern:

The *Katkari* community, despite having a patriarchal system, does not follow the joint family structure, preferring the nuclear family model. They practice early marriage, with boys and girls marrying around the ages of 16 or 17. After marriage, couples construct their independent huts or houses. Despite living independently, they still care for elderly family members. Marriage ceremonies are simple, involving a betel leaf ceremony witnessed by the Pancha. *Katkaris* practice monogamy and widow marriage. They celebrate events like *barasa* with alcohol offerings. The tribal gods '*Hirwa*' and '*Cheda*' are worshipped, and their language is related to the *Bhil Bhasa* group. *Katkaris* are divided into '*Son*' and '*Dhor*,'

with distinct dietary practices. 'Sons' are prevalent in Raigad, while 'Dhors' are found in Thane District (Bokil M., 2006).

Katkari's traditional catechu - making has shifted to small - scale agriculture, while Kolam is mostly cultivators or laborers. Regarding the *Katkari* community's quality of life, their settlements are usually near villages rather than on hilltops, in contrast to Thakkar and *Mahadev Koli* tribes. *Katkari* dwellings, typically made of thatch or karvi and covered with dung, house small livestock like chickens and goats. The practice of leaving villages has reduced, with a focus on maintaining a modest lifestyle with essential daily necessities (Bokil M., 2006). *Katkari* families lack consumer goods and animals, relying significantly on agricultural wage work for income. Women work as low - paid agricultural laborers, while men engage in well - paid agricultural labor in orchards. Non - farm labor is rarely remunerated. Disconnected from their nomadic, forest - based past, *Katkari* families face challenges, including exclusion from MNREGA benefits and reliance on family movement for income. Their distant location, poverty, and limited contact with modern civilization contribute to their vulnerable state (Kulkarni, 2011).

Status of Health, Education and Livelihood:

a) Health status:

From 2005 - 06 (NFHS - 3) to 2015 - 16 (NFHS - 4), significant improvements were noted in Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), Under Five Mortality Rate (UFMR), and anemia among women and children in the Scheduled Tribes category. IMR decreased from 62.1% to 44.4%, and UFMR dropped from 95.7% to 57.2%. However, anemia in women aged 15 to 49 reduced only slightly from 68.5% to 59.8%, and for children aged 6 to 59 months, it decreased from 76.8% to 63.1% (Annual Report 2021 - 22, GoI, MoTA). Disparities persist in the nutritional status of ST children under 5 years. Stunted children decreased from 53.9% to 43.8%, wasted children from 27.6% to 27.4%, and underweight children from 54.4% to 45.3% between 2005 - 06 and 2015 - 16. Gaps in full immunization and vaccination rates for ST children are evident, with full immunization increasing from 31.3% to 55.8%, and unvaccinated students decreasing from 11.5% to 9.2% (Annual Report 2021 - 22, GoI, MoTA).

Institutional delivery for ST women increased from 17.7% to 68% between 2005 - 06 and 2015 - 16, yet a 10% gap compared to overall women remains. The shortage of Public Health Centers, sub - centers, and Female Health Workers/Auxiliary Nurse Midwives is reported in Rural Health Statistics 2019 - 20, emphasizing the need for improved healthcare infrastructure (Annual Report 2021 - 22, GoI, MoTA). Using the Composite Index of Anthropometric Failure (CIAF), child malnutrition among the *Katkari* tribe is highlighted. The study reveals that 65.4% of *Katkari* youngsters are underweight, and 81% of breastfeeding, pregnant, and nursing mothers are undernourished. The economic vulnerability of the *Katkari* tribe is evident, emphasizing the urgency of addressing issues such as housing, clean water, unemployment, and social discrimination (Sahu, 2019).

b) Education:

Despite an increase in the overall literacy rate in India from 64.8% in 2001 to 73% in 2011, there remains a significant gap of about 14 percentage points in the literacy rate of Scheduled Tribes (STs), which increased from 47.1% in 2001 to 59% in 2011. Gender disparities persist, with the literacy rate among ST females lagging behind males, recorded at 49.4% for females compared to 68.5% for males during the same period (Annual Report 2021 - 22, GoI, MoTA).

The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) at Primary and Elementary levels for STs has decreased from 2015 - 16 to 2019 - 20, with only a 3% increase in GER for ST girls in 2019 - 20 compared to 2015 - 16. High dropout rates are observed, with primary, upper primary and secondary ratios declining from 2015 - 16 to 2019 - 20. Despite 65.0% and 68.2% of ST students completing Class Xth and XIIth in 2016, challenges persist, including seasonal migration affecting attendance, compulsory education policies, and cultural factors contributing to higher dropout rates, especially among girls (Annual Report 2021 - 22, GoI, MoTA; Sinha, 2017). Notably, among the *Katkari* tribe in Maharashtra, literacy rates have seen slight growth, increasing from 16% in 1997 to 41.7% in 2011, with concerns raised about the limited educational infrastructure and cultural factors contributing to dropouts (TRTI 1997; Kurane, 2009; TISS 2015; Sinha, 2017).

c) Livelihood:

The *Katkari* tribe, historically engaged in forest - based occupations like catechu production and hunting, faced a decline in livelihoods due to restrictions on tree cutting and shifting agriculture limitations (Tribhuvan & Sherry, 2004; Heredia and Srivastava, 1994; Dalvi & Bokil, 2000). Forced to move in search of work, *Katkari* households began permanent relocations to agricultural settlements on the plains around the 1950s (Sathe, 1988; Buckles and Khedkar, 2013). Diversifying their livelihoods, *Katkaris* engaged in various occupations seasonally, including bonded labor, charcoal - making, sugarcane plantation work, lease farming, and fishing (Buckles et al., 2006). They faced challenges like debt accumulation, employer control over legal documents, and difficult living conditions (Waghmore & Bipin, 2014). During lean months, *Katkaris* obtained loans from brick kiln and coal - making owners, often leading to their classification as living in conditions akin to slavery (Sinah, 2017).

Living in thatched - roof huts with basic amenities, *Katkari* families struggled with issues of drinking water, and poor sanitation, and engaged in different occupations on a rotational basis. Migration to other regions, particularly for brick kiln work, became a common practice for economic and food security (Sinah, 2017; Mutatkar, 2017). Working under contractors was preferred due to uncertainties and payment delays associated with government schemes like MGNREGS and EGS (Sinha, 2017). Research indicates that *Katkaris* face a vicious cycle of social, educational, and economic backwardness, leading to poverty and deprivation (Mutatkar, 2017). Undernutrition is prevalent among *Katkaris*, highlighting their dispersed nature and reliance on others for both livelihoods and habitation (Shahu, 2019). The plight of the *Katkari* tribe underscores the need for comprehensive interventions addressing their multifaceted challenges,

ranging from livelihood sustainability to social and economic upliftment.

Abraham Mutluri's (2020) research highlights that the primary livelihood patterns for Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) youth include farming, daily wages, gathering and selling of forest goods, animal husbandry, and small - scale entrepreneurship. However, their low income, poverty, inadequate connectivity, and isolation in remote forested areas leave them economically disadvantaged. Globalization, urbanization, and privatization show limited impact on PVTG youth, emphasizing the need for financial assistance from the government and NGOs to start their businesses. Media attention and academic research focusing on the economic challenges of PVTG youth are essential for creating awareness and formulating effective policies (Mutluri A., 2020).

In the context of environmental preservation, the traditional fishing communities, including *Katkari*, express concern over the industrial development along the Savitri River. The Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation's (MIDC) discharge of pollutants into the river adversely affects riverine fishing and threatens the existence of significant fish species like Mahseer (Khadas) (Katwate et al., 2014). The negative impact of industrial expansion on *Katkaris* and dependent populations emphasizes the need for sustainable development practices and environmental conservation.

Buckles et al. (2006) outlined *Katkari's* diverse livelihood strategies, including raising animals, farming, fishing, and paid labor. The research emphasized the financial risks associated with these livelihoods and suggested exploring ways to lower participation costs. Sathe (1988) highlighted the exploitation faced by tribal people involved in coal production, with illiteracy reaching 94%. The research revealed that the charcoal industry often forced families into seasonal migration and mistreated jobs due to limited alternatives, affecting family stability and educational progress.

Bipasha Sinha's (2017) study underscored the government's undermining of *Katkari's* primary income sources in the name of environmental preservation. Interventions in relief and development were recommended to address their immediate survival needs, emphasizing cooperative ventures, sustainable livelihoods, and preventing migration. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's role in safeguarding the rights of Scheduled Tribes (STs) in India, including representation in political bodies, education, and special officers' appointments, played a pivotal role in tribal upliftment post - independence (Ambagudia, 2007). However, despite these safeguards, STs continue to face socioeconomic disparities. According to Deshpande (2015), while STs own more land than scheduled castes, their monthly per capita spending remains the lowest, indicating enduring inequalities.

The livelihood status of tribal communities in India, shaped by diverse factors such as geography, community type, demographics, and socio - cultural elements, reflects a complex multidimensional phenomenon (Kumar et al., 2009). Government reservation policies have increased tribal participation in formal sector jobs, but challenges persist in

human capital development, with the policy favoring those with higher education and income (Mehta & Singh, 2021). Research illustrates a transition in the subsistence system of scheduled tribes towards the mainstream market economy, evident in changes like the evolution of agricultural practices in Tripura and labor migration to metropolitan areas (Sengupta, 2013; Marchang, 2019). Tribal livelihood diversification serves as a risk mitigation strategy against agroclimatic, sociopolitical, and economic uncertainties (Bora & Mahanta, 2022). In Jharkhand, embracing forestry resources and educational opportunities enhances tribal employment prospects (Satpati & Kumar Sharma, 2021).

Environmental challenges, including climate change and deforestation, significantly impact indigenous livelihoods (Jerez Mirian, 2021). Alternative livelihood options like organic farming and agroforestry are recognized in Visakhapatnam (Naidu, 2020), while eco - literacy influences tribal perspectives on well - being (Majumdar, 2022). Despite positive outcomes in West Bengal with the Tribal Sub - Plan, challenges persist for specific tribes like the Koraga, facing unemployment and unsanitary conditions (Abhishek, 2020; Sabitha, 2019). Kumar and Bipin (2022) challenge the notion of tribal populations as exclusively rural, highlighting their presence in urban areas. Upholding constitutional rights, especially regarding land and territoriality, is crucial for preserving the distinctive identities, traditional knowledge systems, and ecological practices of scheduled tribes (Kannabiran, 2016).

Impact of industrialization on the livelihood of Tribals:

Industrialization, marked by a shift from agrarian to industrial societies, brings about significant social and economic changes (Kapoor, 2014). However, its impact on tribal livelihoods has been profound, leading to their displacement and reliance on unsustainable mining employment like daily wage labor (Cobden - Ramsay, 1930). India's rapid macroeconomic changes since the 1990s have heightened insecurity in rural and tribal livelihoods, disrupting traditional relationships with nature (Hiremath, 2007). Globalization benefits have predominantly favored the urban sector, leaving the rural sector, particularly tribal communities, lagging in development (Hiremath, 2007).

Tribes, once isolated in distant forest locations, now face drastic changes due to large - scale industrialization, urbanization, and deforestation, leading to their displacement (Nathan & Xaxa, 2012; Singh, 2012). Water quality in industrial areas, like the Mahad M. I. D. C., is deteriorating due to increased contamination from extensive industry and urbanization (Kekane & Chavan, 2020). Development projects and industrialization, instead of improving socio - economic conditions, have, in some cases, exacerbated poverty, illiteracy, malnutrition, and inadequate services for tribal populations (Paltasingh & Paliwal, 2014). Land acquisition by Indian and foreign companies for industrial and developmental projects, especially in Jharkhand and Orissa, poses a severe threat to indigenous societies (Ekka, 2012).

Degradation of land and forest resources has forced small tribal farmers to seek alternative livelihoods, with many entering non - agricultural sectors as day laborers (Minj, Kishore, 2015). Sakav, addressing land issues, reveals the

perilous state of tribal land rights amid rapid industrialization and urbanization (Ketkar, 2016). *Katkaris*, reliant on forests and educationally disadvantaged, face displacement due to policies like SEZs, with 33 sanctioned in Raigad district (Ketkar, 2016). *Thakars*, comparatively economically stable, own land. Sakav advocates for land document transfers to tribals, empowering self - help groups. Women exhibit leadership, opting for alternative livelihoods (Ketkar, 2016).

The Social Movements and Non - Government Organizations efforts for the development of *Katkaris*:

In his study, Milind Bokil highlights the impactful efforts of various social movements for the welfare of tribal communities. The movement against exploitation by large landholders, initiated by Acharya Bhise through '*Adivasi Seva Mandal*' in Bordi, Dahanu, marked the early stages of resistance (Bokil, 2006). Pioneering models of pre - primary schooling were developed by Tarabai Modak and Anutai Wagh in Bordi, while Grammangal, founded by Professor Ramesh Panse, carried forward the educational approach (Bokil, 2006). Ms. Godavari Parulekar and the 'Usuf Mehar Ali Center' contributed to tribal social awareness and community health work (Bokil, 2006).

'*Bhumisena*,' initiated by Kaluram Dhondale, worked on land rights, and '*Kastakari Sanghatana*' focused on tribal rights in Thane District during the 1970s (Bokil, 2006). '*Shramjeevi Sanghatana*' from Vasai and '*Shramik Mukti Sanghatana*' from Murbad played vital roles in mobilizing and organizing tribal communities (Bokil, 2006). 'The Academy of Development Science' promoted tribal education in science and technology in 1980 (Bokil, 2006). Surekha Dalvi and Rajiv Patil, through '*Shramik Mukti Sanghatana*' (1983), raised awareness about social, economic, and constitutional rights among Raigad tribals (Bokil, 2006). In Karjat, Nancy Giakwad initiated the '*Jagrut Kashtakari Sanghatana*,' later joined by '*Disha Kendra*,' adding constructive efforts (Bokil, 2006). Organizations like '*Nirmiti*,' '*Parivartan - 84*,' '*Sakav*,' and '*Sarvahara Jan Andolan*' made significant strides in Raigad, advocating for land rights, food security, labor rights, and natural resources (Bokil, 2006). Ulka Mahajan's impactful activism against powerful landlords and contractors brought success and recognition to the *Katkar* community at the national level (Bokil, 2006). The collaborative effort '*Shoshit Jan Andolan*' by *Shramik Kranti Sanghatana*, *Jagrut Kastakari Sanghatana*, and *Sarvahara Jan Andolan* positively impacted tribal lives (Bokil, 2006). All of these efforts have had a significant influence, as seen by the implementation of various government policies and schemes aimed at establishing tribal rights. Several issues concerning tribal rights were raised, including '*Dalhi*' (hill slope land used for cultivation) land property rights, allotment of rationing cards to people living below the poverty line under Public Distribution Schemes (PDS), prevention of land alienation, personal identity cards for electoral rights, and so on.

Sarvahara Jan Andolan succeeds in de - notification of the 10, 000 - hectare Maha Mumbai Special Economic Zone (MSEZ) (www.sruti. org. in). The Forest Rights Act of 2006 emerged from tribals' persistent advocacy, granting them rights over forest resources. Despite provisions for community involvement in forest management, bureaucratic resistance and sidelining of local governance bodies hinder

effective implementation. *Gramsabhas* are tasked with processing rights applications, yet their authority is often undermined. Poor enforcement obstructs tribal empowerment and social change, underscoring the ongoing challenges in realizing the Act's transformative potential. The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, was enacted to recognize and vest forest rights and occupation of forest land in forest - dwelling Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers who have been residing in such forested areas for many years. The Maharashtra Resettlement of Project Displaced Persons Act, 1976 safeguards the rights of the displaced (Lahiri S., 2023).

Government Policies and Schemes

The inclusive development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) in India is addressed through strategic schemes and funding allocations. The NITI Ayog report (2018) outlines specific initiatives for the overall development of 75 identified PVTGs among Scheduled Tribes in 18 states and UTs. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs directs the implementation of the 'Conservation cum Development (CCD)' scheme since April 2015, aiming to maximize resource utilization and achieve diverse objectives. The CCD plan encompasses activities tailored to the socio - cultural environment of PVTGs, including livelihood creation, employment opportunities, economic development in agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry, and skill development (GOI, MoTA, 2015).

Educational and economic programs are prioritized for the inclusive development of Scheduled Tribes, with the National Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation and Tribal Marketing Federation of India giving special attention to PVTGs. The constitutional provision Article 338 - A establishes the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes, overseeing safeguards and intervening in case of violations. The National Scheduled Tribes Finance & Development Corporation, established in 2001, provides concessional financial assistance for economic and educational development. NSTFDC's initiatives include term loans, the *Adivasi Mahila Sashakikaran Yojana* for women's economic development, and schemes for educational and skill development. Additionally, the Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED), founded in 1987, operates under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, facilitating tribal economic activities with its network of regional offices (NSTFDC, GOI, TRIFED).

3. Methodology

This study employs a multidisciplinary approach to comprehensively understand the struggles and opportunities faced by the *Katkar* tribe in achieving socio - economic development and sustainable livelihoods. The methodology integrates a review of qualitative and quantitative research papers which provides a holistic analysis of the socio - economic, health, education, and livelihood dimensions. A comprehensive review of existing literature on tribal communities, particularly the *Katkar* tribe, forms the foundation. This involves an in - depth exploration of historical documents, government reports, academic research, and socio - anthropological studies. The literature review aims to establish a context for the *Katkar* tribe's struggles,

the impact of government policies, and the role of social movements. Statistical analysis of government reports, census data, and health and education indicators will be conducted to quantify the socio - economic status of the *Katkari* tribe. This includes examining trends in literacy rates, health outcomes, and economic indicators over time. Comparative analyses with other tribal communities and the general population will be conducted to identify disparities.

4. Discussion

The multifaceted challenges faced by tribal communities, particularly the *Katkari* tribe in Maharashtra, reflect the complex interplay of historical, socioeconomic, and environmental factors. A comprehensive discussion and analysis of the literature, shedding light on the diverse aspects of the *Katkari* tribe's livelihood, health, education, and the role of social movements and governmental policies in fostering sustainable development. The historical shift from the forest - based socio - economic and livelihood state of *Katkari* is in wander and repeating identity of agricultural labor, bonded labor, overall, a dependent population on powerful sections of the population. Their shift from independent to dependent is because of environmental policies, displacement, and limitations in access to rights including land, employment, and leadership. Forced relocation led to a decline in traditional livelihoods, pushing *Katkaris* toward seasonal migration and exposing them to poverty, illiteracy, and limited contact with modern civilization. Misidentifications in census data impede accurate demographic representations, underlining the importance of advanced research methods.

Katkari's transition from traditional catechu - making to small - scale agriculture and various seasonal occupations reflects their adaptive response to changing circumstances. However, challenges like debt accumulation, limited alternatives, and exploitation persist, especially in occupations such as charcoal - making and sugarcane plantation work. The dispersion of *Katkari* settlements near villages, their modest dwellings, and reliance on agricultural wage work underscores the socioeconomic vulnerabilities faced by the community. Health indicators reveal improvements in Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) and Under Five Mortality Rate (UFMR) among Scheduled Tribes (STs) in India, although disparities persist in anemia and nutritional status. However, the *Katkari* tribe faces specific challenges, with a high prevalence of underweight children and undernourished mothers, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions. Educationally, despite a slight increase in literacy rates among *Katkaris*, there remains a significant gap compared to the overall literacy rate in India. High dropout rates, especially among girls, pose obstacles to educational progress, further aggravated by seasonal migration and cultural factors.

Governmental initiatives such as the Conservation cum Development (CCD) scheme and institutions like the National Scheduled Tribes Finance & Development Corporation aim to address the unique challenges faced by PVTGs, including the *Katkari* tribe. These initiatives focus on livelihood creation, economic development, skill enhancement, and educational support. However, the effectiveness of these schemes needs continuous evaluation,

especially considering the nuanced socio - economic landscape of PVTGs.

The role of social movements and non - government organizations (NGOs) in tribal development is evident in various endeavors. The collaborative efforts '*Shramjeevi Sanghatana*', '*Sarvahara Jan Andolan*', '*Shoshit Jan Andolan*', and organizations like '*Nirmitti*' and '*Sakav*' contribute significantly to advocacy for land rights, food security, and labor rights. The impact of these efforts on the ground, their sustainability, and the level of community engagement are critical aspects to assess for future interventions. The review also revealed Tribal women's involvement in economic activities which signifies participation in agro - economic operations. There is a need to enhance women's capacities for productive endeavors, family and social change, decision - making processes, political representation, entrepreneurial growth, and social leadership.

The entire journey of this review opens a high scope to study their socio - economic and livelihood status and gaps in existing opportunities. There is a need to study changing patterns of livelihood and their diversification, vulnerabilities, and adaptability to cope with crisis and the role of development agency involvement in the implementation of sustainable development interventions. It is important to note that diversification of livelihoods only ensures the maintenance of a given standard of life rather than improving the existing standard of living. It is need to apply appropriate strategies for sustainable socio - economic development by overcoming the barriers. The research focus also requires checking the scope to sustain equity at political, social, and economic levels while expanding ambitious projects and applying modernization. The UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030 aim for inclusive growth and leaving no one behind. The UN World Social Report 2020 emphasized reducing inequality within and between nations (UN, 2020). Hence there is a need to design social interventions with the importance of social inclusion, political rights, and supportive environments for social movements and local associations to achieve SDG 10 and promote an inclusive and sustainable society.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, tribal communities globally face challenges like poverty and lower life expectancy. In India, Scheduled Tribes, particularly PVTGs, encounter complexities related to displacement, resource exploitation, and socio - economic disparities. The evolution of nomenclature and recognition reflects efforts to address these issues, but the path toward the comprehensive well - being of tribal populations remains an ongoing endeavor. Tribal Classification and Evolution of Nomenclature information reflects the journey from primitive to scheduled tribe. This nomenclature aimed at identifying and differentiating groups based on physical features, language, religion, customs, and social organization. The *Katkari* tribe's struggle for sustainable livelihood is deeply rooted in historical classifications. The livelihood status of tribal communities is influenced by a myriad of factors, including government policies, economic shifts, environmental changes, and constitutional rights. While some

tribes experience positive transformations through diversification and policy interventions, others face persistent challenges, necessitating comprehensive and context-specific interventions for sustainable development.

The discussion and analysis underscore the complex web of challenges faced by the *Katkari* tribe, ranging from historical disruptions in livelihoods to contemporary issues in health and education. The role of social movements, governmental policies, and interventions by NGOs becomes pivotal in crafting sustainable solutions. The need for context-specific, community-driven approaches is emphasized, considering the unique socio-economic dynamics of PVTGs like the *Katkari* tribe. Continuous evaluation and adaptive strategies are essential to ensure the holistic development and well-being of the *Katkari* community.

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