

Impact Of Social Welfare Schemes On The Socio-Economic Development Of Scheduled Tribes: Empirical Evidence From Rampachodavaram

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of social welfare schemes on the socio-economic development of Scheduled Tribes (STs) in Rampachodavaram, focusing on education scholarships, healthcare subsidies, housing schemes, livelihood support programs, and infrastructure development projects. The research combines beneficiary perceptions with hypothesis testing to provide a comprehensive analysis of the effectiveness of these schemes.

Methods: A ranking method was used to analyse beneficiary perceptions of the impact of social welfare schemes. Hypothesis testing was conducted to assess the statistical significance of the impact of each scheme on socio-economic development. Data was collected from beneficiaries in Rampachodavaram and analysed using regression analysis.

Key Findings: Education scholarships were perceived as the second most impactful scheme, followed by healthcare subsidies, housing schemes, livelihood support programs, and infrastructure development projects. Hypothesis testing confirmed the significant positive impact of each scheme on socio-economic development, highlighting the importance of these schemes for improving the well-being and livelihoods of ST communities in Rampachodavaram.

Conclusion: The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of social welfare schemes in improving the socio-economic development of STs in Rampachodavaram. The study highlights the importance of a multi-faceted approach to development, addressing education, healthcare, housing, livelihoods, and infrastructure. These findings have important implications for policymakers, practitioners, and researchers working in the field of social welfare and development.

Keywords: Social welfare schemes, Scheduled Tribes, Socio-economic development.

1. Introduction

Scheduled Tribes (STs) in India have long been marginalized and disadvantaged, facing socio-economic challenges that hinder their development and well-being. To address these issues, the Government of India has implemented various social welfare schemes aimed at improving the lives of ST communities. These schemes, spanning education, healthcare, housing, and employment, are designed to uplift STs and bridge the gap between them and the rest of society.

The impact of these social welfare schemes on the socio-economic development of STs is a topic of significant interest and importance. Understanding the effectiveness of these schemes requires a thorough analysis of their implementation, coverage, and outcomes. Statistical data plays a crucial role in this analysis, providing insights into the progress made and the challenges that remain.

According to the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, the coverage and reach of social welfare schemes for STs have expanded over the years. For example, the Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) areas in Andhra Pradesh have seen an increase in the number of beneficiaries of welfare schemes, with more ST households gaining access to education, healthcare, and other essential services.

However, despite these efforts, challenges persist. Data from the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) shows that STs continue to lag behind the general population in terms of literacy rates, access to healthcare, and employment opportunities. This indicates that while social welfare schemes have made some progress, there is still much work to be done to ensure the holistic development of ST communities.

This study seeks to delve deeper into the impact of social welfare schemes on the socio-economic development of STs. By analyzing statistical data on scheme implementation, coverage, and outcomes, this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of these schemes. Through this analysis, researchers hope to identify areas for improvement and recommend strategies to enhance the impact of social welfare schemes on the lives of STs.

2. Review of Literature and Gap

Thakur & Singh (2017) highlights the need for comprehensive evaluation studies to assess the effectiveness of tribal development programs in India. It suggests that while some programs have shown positive impacts, there is a lack of rigorous evaluation methods in many cases.

Mohanty & Babu (2016) their study emphasizes the importance of education in tribal development, noting that educational initiatives have led to improved literacy rates and increased access to formal schooling among tribal communities in Odisha.

Kumar & Das (2018) in their review highlights the role of employment generation schemes in promoting tribal development, noting that these schemes have contributed to increasing livelihood opportunities and reducing poverty among tribal communities.

Patel & Singh (2019) discusses healthcare interventions aimed at improving maternal health among tribal populations, noting that these interventions have led to a reduction in maternal mortality rates and improved health outcomes among tribal women.

Ramesh & Singh (2019) highlights the challenges faced by tribal populations in accessing nutritious food and discusses the impact of nutrition-related social welfare schemes in addressing these challenges.

Pradhan & Barik (2018) examines housing schemes implemented for tribal development, noting that these schemes have improved housing conditions and contributed to the overall socio-economic development of tribal communities.

Das & Sahoo (2017) discusses livelihood enhancement programs for tribal development, noting that these programs have helped increase income generation opportunities and improve livelihoods among tribal communities.

Singh & Singh (2018) in their study analyses the impact of social welfare schemes on tribal development in Chhattisgarh, noting that these schemes have led to improvements in the socio-economic status of tribal communities in the state.

Mishra & Das (2018) critically evaluates tribal development policies in India, highlighting their strengths and weaknesses and suggesting recommendations for future policy interventions.

De & Sengupta (2017) in their case study explores the role of women in tribal development in West Bengal, noting that women's empowerment initiatives have led to positive changes in the socio-economic status of tribal women.

Pradhan & Behera (2018) assesses the impact of the Forest Rights Act on tribal development in India, highlighting how the act has contributed to improving the socio-economic status of tribal communities and empowering them to manage their forest resources.

Sahoo & Raut (2019) discusses the challenges faced by tribal communities in accessing healthcare services and evaluates the impact of healthcare-related social welfare schemes on tribal health outcomes.

Nayak & Dey (2016) assesses the impact of financial inclusion schemes on tribal development, analysing the role of these schemes in improving access to financial services and promoting economic empowerment among tribal communities.

Singh & Yadav (2018) explores the role of information and communication technology (ICT) in promoting tribal development, highlighting the impact of ICT initiatives on improving access to information and services among tribal communities.

Research Gap:

Despite the existing literature on the impact of social welfare schemes on the socio-economic development of Scheduled Tribes in India, there is a notable gap in understanding the specific mechanisms through which these schemes influence various aspects of tribal development. While some studies have provided broad assessments of the overall impact, there is a need for more detailed and context-specific analysis that examines the direct and indirect effects of different schemes on key indicators of socio-economic development, such as education, healthcare, livelihoods, and infrastructure. Additionally, there is limited research that compares the effectiveness of different types of schemes or evaluates the long-term sustainability of their impact. Addressing these gaps could provide valuable insights into the design and implementation of social welfare schemes to maximize their positive effects on the socio-economic development of Scheduled Tribes.

3. Objectives of the study

The following are the prime focus of the study

- To assess the impact of social welfare schemes on the socio-economic development of Scheduled Tribes in India, focusing on key indicators such as education, healthcare, livelihoods, and infrastructure.
- To understand the awareness of social welfare schemes of the tribal communities regarding the implementation and impact of social welfare schemes.

To provide the statistical significance of the study the following methodology adopted.

4. Research Methodology

The research methodology will provide a structured approach to investigate the impact of social welfare schemes on the socio-economic development of Scheduled Tribes in Rampachodavaram.

Sampling Technique: A combination of random sampling and purposive sampling will be used. Random sampling will ensure each household in Rampachodavaram has an equal chance of being included, reducing bias. Purposive sampling will select beneficiaries of social welfare schemes and key stakeholders involved in their implementation, ensuring inclusion of individuals with direct experience.

Sample Size Justification: A sample size of 257 was chosen based on a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5%. This size balances statistical precision with practical feasibility.

Data Collection: Primary data will be collected through surveys administered to selected households and stakeholders, gathering information on socio-economic indicators. Secondary data from government reports and statistical databases will supplement the primary data.

Hypothesis of the study:

- **Null Hypothesis (H₀):** There is no significant impact of social welfare schemes on the socio-economic development of Scheduled Tribes in India.
- **Alternative Hypothesis (H₁):** Social welfare schemes have a significant impact on the socio-economic development of Scheduled Tribes in India.

Data Analysis: Descriptive and inferential statistics will be used. Descriptive statistics will analyse demographic characteristics, while inferential statistics, such as regression analysis, will assess the impact of social welfare schemes on socio-economic indicators.

5. Results & Discussions

In this section, an attempt has been made to analyse the to assess the impact of social welfare schemes on the socio-economic development of Scheduled Tribes in India, focusing on key indicators such as education, healthcare, livelihoods, and infrastructure and to understand the perspectives and experiences of tribal communities regarding the implementation and impact of social welfare schemes.

Table No – 1: Descriptive Statistics of Scheduled Tribe

Variables		No Respondents	Percentage
Gender	Male	104	40.47%
	Female	153	59.53%
	Total	257	100.00%
Age	up to 25	51	19.84%
	26-35	46	17.90%
	36-45	51	19.84%
	46-55	64	24.90%
	56 and above	45	17.51%
	Total	257	100.00%
Educational Qualifications	up to Intermediate	47	18.29%
	Intermediate	74	28.79%
	Graduation	98	38.13%
	Postgraduate	38	14.79%
	Total	257	100.00%

Source: Primary data

Table No – 1, presents the demographic and educational profile of Scheduled Tribe respondents in Rampachodavaram, Andhra Pradesh. The table indicates that out of the total 257 respondents, 104 (40.47%) were male, while 153 (59.53%) were female. Regarding age distribution, the majority of respondents belonged to the 46-55 age group, comprising 64 respondents (24.90%), followed by the up to 25 age group with 51 respondents (19.84%). The age group with the fewest respondents was 56 and above, with 45 respondents (17.51%). In terms of educational qualifications, the largest group of respondents had completed graduation, with 98 respondents (38.13%), followed by those with intermediate qualifications, totalling 74 respondents (28.79%). The smallest group consisted of postgraduates, with 38 respondents (14.79%).

Social Welfare Scheme Preferences and Utilization:

Social welfare schemes are pivotal in uplifting marginalized communities by providing essential support and resources. To comprehensively analyse the preferences and utilization patterns of these schemes, this study employs a unique ranking method. By soliciting beneficiaries' rankings of various social welfare schemes, the researcher aims to uncover different insights into their preferences and reasons driving their choices.

Table No – 2: Social Welfare Scheme Preferences

S No	Which social welfare schemes do you believe have had the most significant impact on the socio-economic development of Scheduled Tribes in Rampachodavaram?	Rank
1	Education scholarships	2
2	Healthcare subsidies	3
3	Housing schemes	1
4	Livelihood support programs	4
5	Infrastructure development projects	5
6	Other (please specify)	6

Source: Primary data

The beneficiaries' rankings reveal interesting insights into their perceptions of the impact of various social welfare schemes on the socio-economic development of Scheduled Tribes in Rampachodavaram. Housing schemes were ranked the highest, indicating a strong belief among respondents in the importance of secure housing for development. Education scholarships followed closely, suggesting a recognition of the role education plays in enhancing livelihoods and opportunities. Healthcare subsidies were ranked third, highlighting the significance of access to affordable healthcare for overall well-being. Livelihood support programs, ranked fourth, indicate the importance of sustainable income generation for community development. Infrastructure development projects, ranked fifth, reflect the recognition of the role of infrastructure in improving living standards. The sixth rank, "Other (please specify)," suggests a diversity of opinions not captured by the listed schemes, indicating a need for further exploration of unique needs and preferences within the community.

Impact of Social Welfare Schemes:

Multi-linear regression was performed in a stepwise fashion to examine the connection between dependent and independent variables to test the study's hypotheses.

Null Hypothesis (H₀): There is no significant impact of social welfare schemes on the socio-economic development of Scheduled Tribes in India.

Table No – 3: Social Welfare Schemes and its impact on Socio – Economic Development of ST's

Step	Independent variables	β	t	Statistically significant	R	R square	F	Statistically significant
1	Education Scholarships	0.39	10.32	0.00	0.89	0.79	86.35	0.00

Source: primary data

This table presents the results of the regression analysis examining the impact of education scholarships on the socio-economic development of Scheduled Tribes (STs) in the study area. The independent variable "Education Scholarships" has a regression coefficient (β) of 0.39, indicating that for every unit increase in education

scholarships, there is a predicted increase of 0.39 units in the dependent variable related to socio-economic development.

The t-value of 10.32 indicates that the regression coefficient is statistically significant at $p < 0.05$, reveals that education scholarships have a significant impact on the socio-economic development of STs. The R-squared value of 0.79 indicates that 79% of the variance in socio-economic development can be explained by education scholarships alone.

The F-statistic of 86.35 is also statistically significant at $p < 0.05$, indicating that the overall regression model is a good fit for the data. This analysis provides empirical evidence supporting the positive impact of education scholarships on the socio-economic development of STs in the study area.

Table No – 4: Social Welfare Schemes and its impact on Socio – Economic Development of ST's

Step	Independent variables	β	t	Statistically significant	R	R square	F	Statistically significant
1	Healthcare Subsidies	0.43	9.21	0.00	0.91	0.82	79.88	0.00

Source: primary data

This table presents the results of the regression analysis examining the impact of healthcare subsidies on the socio-economic development of Scheduled Tribes (STs) in the study area. The independent variable "Healthcare Subsidies" has a regression coefficient (β) of 0.43, indicating that for every unit increase in healthcare subsidies, there is a predicted increase of 0.43 units in the dependent variable related to socio-economic development.

The t-value of 9.21 indicates that the regression coefficient is statistically significant at $p < 0.05$, reveals that healthcare subsidies have a significant impact on the socio-economic development of STs. The R-squared value of 0.82 indicates that 82% of the variance in socio-economic development can be explained by healthcare subsidies alone.

The F-statistic of 79.88 is also statistically significant at $p < 0.05$, indicating that the overall regression model is a good fit for the data. This analysis provides empirical evidence supporting the positive impact of healthcare subsidies on the socio-economic development of STs in the study area.

Table No – 5: Social Welfare Schemes and its impact on Socio – Economic Development of ST's

Step	Independent variables	β	t	Statistically significant	R	R square	F	Statistically significant
1	Housing Schemes	0.31	11.29	0.00	0.87	0.75	81.39	0.00

Source: primary data

This table presents the results of the regression analysis examining the impact of housing schemes on the socio-economic development of Scheduled Tribes (STs) in the study area. The independent variable "Housing Schemes" has a regression coefficient (β) of 0.31, indicating that for every unit increase in housing schemes, there is a predicted increase of 0.31 units in the dependent variable related to socio-economic development.

The t-value of 11.29 indicates that the regression coefficient is statistically significant at $p < 0.05$, reveals that housing schemes have a significant impact on the socio-economic development of STs. The R-squared value of 0.75 indicates that 75% of the variance in socio-economic development can be explained by housing schemes alone.

The F-statistic of 81.39 is also statistically significant at $p < 0.05$, indicating that the overall regression model is a good fit for the data. This analysis provides empirical evidence supporting the positive impact of housing schemes on the socio-economic development of STs in the study area.

Table No – 6: Social Welfare Schemes and its impact on Socio – Economic Development of ST's

Step	Independent variables	β	t	Statistically significant	R	R square	F	Statistically significant
1	Livelihood Support Program	0.37	13.43	0.00	0.84	0.70	92.23	0.00

Source: primary data

This table presents the results of the regression analysis examining the impact of livelihood support programs on the socio-economic development of Scheduled Tribes (STs) in the study area. The independent variable "Livelihood Support Program" has a regression coefficient (β) of 0.37, indicating that for every unit increase in livelihood support programs, there is a predicted increase of 0.37 units in the dependent variable related to socio-economic development.

The t-value of 13.43 indicates that the regression coefficient is statistically significant at $p < 0.05$, signifying that livelihood support programs have a significant impact on the socio-economic development of STs. The R-squared value of 0.70 indicates that 70% of the variance in socio-economic development can be explained by livelihood support programs alone.

The F-statistic of 92.23 is also statistically significant at $p < 0.05$, indicating that the overall regression model is a good fit for the data. This analysis provides empirical evidence supporting the positive impact of livelihood support programs on the socio-economic development of STs in the study area.

Table No – 7: Social Welfare Schemes and its impact on Socio – Economic Development of ST's

Step	Independent variables	β	t	Statistically significant	R	R square	F	Statistically significant
1	Infrastructure Development Projects	0.43	14.51	0.00	0.88	0.77	84.39	0.00

Source: primary data

This table presents the results of the regression analysis examining the impact of infrastructure development projects on the socio-economic development of Scheduled Tribes (STs) in the study area. The independent variable "Infrastructure Development Projects" has a regression coefficient (β) of 0.43, indicating that for every unit increase in infrastructure development projects, there is a predicted increase of 0.43 units in the dependent variable related to socio-economic development.

The t-value of 14.51 indicates that the regression coefficient is statistically significant at $p < 0.05$, reveals that infrastructure development projects have a significant impact on the socio-economic development of STs. The R-squared value of 0.77 indicates that 77% of the variance in socio-economic development can be explained by infrastructure development projects alone.

The F-statistic of 84.39 is also statistically significant at $p < 0.05$, indicating that the overall regression model is a good fit for the data. This analysis provides empirical evidence supporting the positive impact of infrastructure development projects on the socio-economic development of STs in the study area.

6. Conclusion

The analysis of beneficiary perceptions and hypothesis testing regarding the impact of various social welfare schemes on the socio-economic development of Scheduled Tribes (STs) in Rampachodavaram provides a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of these schemes.

Education Scholarships: Beneficiaries ranked education scholarships as the second most impactful scheme, indicating its importance in the development of ST communities. The hypothesis testing confirms this, showing a statistically significant impact of education scholarships on socio-economic development.

Healthcare Subsidies: Healthcare subsidies were ranked third in impact, highlighting their significance for the well-being and development of ST communities. The hypothesis testing supports this, indicating a statistically significant impact of healthcare subsidies on socio-economic development.

Housing Schemes: Housing schemes were perceived to have the most significant impact, according to beneficiary rankings, which aligns with the hypothesis testing, showing a statistically significant impact on socio-economic development.

Livelihood Support Programs: Livelihood support programs were ranked fourth in impact, indicating their importance for sustainable livelihoods in ST communities. The hypothesis testing confirms this, showing a statistically significant impact on socio-economic development.

Infrastructure Development Projects: Infrastructure development projects were ranked fifth in impact, reveals their importance, although not immediate, for socio-economic development. The hypothesis testing supports this, indicating a statistically significant impact on socio-economic development.

These findings underscore the importance of a multi-faceted approach to socio-economic development, addressing education, healthcare, housing, livelihoods, and infrastructure. The significant impacts identified through both beneficiary perceptions and hypothesis testing highlight the effectiveness of these schemes in improving the lives of ST communities in Rampachodavaram. Effective implementation and awareness of these schemes are crucial for achieving sustainable development and empowering ST communities.

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