

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature pertaining to the study on “**Empowerment and Sustainable Development of Senguttaiyur Village Tribal Women on Eco – based Well - being Strategies**” is discussed under the following headings:

- A. Irular – A Designated PVTG and their Eco System Perspective**
- B. Status quo of Tribal Women**
- C. Sustainable Development of Tribal – Rhetoric and Reality**
- D. Empowerment of Tribal Women for Well – being Strategies**
- E. Governmental Strategies – Sustainable Development Vs Women**

A. Irular – A Designated PVTG

The term tribe refers to a cultural and historical concept. It is used in terms of folk urban continuum along which different groups are classified, given a certain order of material culture and stage of technological growth and classified as tribes. A tribe is a collection of families bearing a common name, speaking a common dialect, occupying or professing to occupy a common territory and is not usually endogamous though originally it might have been so (The Imperial Gazetteer of India, 1911). In terms of size anthropologists usually define tribal societies as small-scale social systems, yet it is pointed out that these criteria fail to support the contention that distinct tribal communities do exist in India.

Kumar (2002) states that a tribe is a group of bands, occupying a contiguous territory or territories and having a feeling of unity deriving from numerous similarities in culture, frequent contacts, and a certain community of interests..

India with a variety of ecosystems, (Vaid et al., (2011) presents a varied tribal population throughout its length and breadth. The areas inhabited by the tribal constitute a significant part of the under developed areas of the country. The tribal live mostly in isolated villages or hamlets, a smaller portion of their population have now settled in permanent villages as well as in towns and cities.

According to Oxford Dictionary tribe is a group of people in a primitive or barbarous stage of development acknowledging the authority of a chief and usually regarding them as having a common ancestor.

Box:2 Characteristics of Tribe

- ✓ Tribe is a group of families.
- ✓ Each tribe has a name.
- ✓ Tribes speak common language or dialect.
- ✓ Tribes reside in a common territory.
- ✓ Tribes observe taboos related to marriage.
- ✓ Tribes have a common occupation.
- ✓ Tribes have well developed system of reciprocal exchange.
- ✓ Tribes have a common culture.

A.1. Scheduled Tribe

Pramukh and Palkumar (2006) infer that prior to the birth of Republican Constitution of India in 1950, terms such as Aborigines', Adivasis', Forest Tribes', Hill Tribes' and Primitive Tribes' were in use. Tribe was a value added term since it designated a particular stage of socio-political evolution of a community, with a given territory and language area. Up to 1919 the tribes were included along with other communities as Backward Class' and Depressed Class'. In 1931 census, the term Primitive tribes' was used to specify those communities who were till then termed Forest Tribes or Hill Tribes. In 1941 census, it was just mentioned as Tribes dropping all adjectives. From 1950, under the Constitution of India, the tribal's are referred to as Schedule Tribes.

In his study, Kunhaman (2002) had discussed two categories of marginalized groups: traditionally marginalized and those who are marginalized in the wake of capitalist transformation. In his view the adivasis and dalits are the most oppressed groups and victims of poverty, illiteracy, disease and various other disabilities, in addition to various social discriminations.

According to The Constitution of India, 2012 Scheduled Tribes are those, who have been notified by the President of India under Article 342(i) and 342(ii) under Article 342 of the Indian Constitution. Post-Independence, the Government of India proposed the formulation of a National Policy on Scheduled Tribes. The policy sought to bring Scheduled Tribes into the mainstream of society through a multi-pronged approach for their all-round development without disturbing their distinct culture. The first notification was issued in 1950; the President considered characteristics like the tribe's primitive traits, distinctive culture, shyness with the public at large, geographical isolation and social and economic backwardness before notifying them as a Scheduled Tribe.

Box:3 The Constitution of India - Article 342. Scheduled Tribes (ST)

The President may with respect to any State or Union territory, and where it is a State, after consultation with the Governor thereof, by public notification, specify the tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within tribes or tribal communities which shall for the purposes of this Constitution be deemed to be Scheduled Tribes in relation to that State or Union territory, as the case may be Parliament may by law include in or exclude from the list of Scheduled Tribes specified in a notification issued under clause (i) any tribe or tribal community or part of or group within any tribe or tribal community, but save as aforesaid a notification issued under the said clause shall not be varied by any subsequent notification. Article 342 of the Constitution of India proclaims that, there are 697 tribes as per Central Government statistics. More than half of the Indian tribal populations are concentrated mostly in the States of Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Jharkhand and Gujarat. Other Indian tribal societies are found in Rajasthan, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, West Bengal, Mizoram and other states of North Eastern India (Encyclopedia of India, 2012).

Tribal population of India constitute 10,42,81,034 of total population of the Country (8.6% of the total population); they are classified under ST, of which 50.25 per cent are male and 49.74 per cent are female (Census of India 2011). The decadal growth rate of the tribal population during 2001-2011 is 23.7 per cent which is higher than India's total decadal growth (17.6 per cent).

State wise per cent distribution of tribal population indicates that the highest proportion of tribal population resides in north eastern states namely; Mizoram (94.4 %), Nagaland (86.5 %), and Meghalaya (86.1%). In contrast, lowest tribal concentration is in Union Territory of Daman and Diu (0.01 per cent). No ST population is recorded in Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi & Pondicherry States/UT's.

A.2. Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG)

The Dhebar Commission (1960-1961) stated that within Scheduled Tribes there existed an inequality in the rate of development. During the fourth Five Year Plan a sub-category was created within Scheduled Tribes to identify groups that were considered to be at a lower level of development. This sub-category was named "Primitive tribal group". The features of such a group include a pre-agricultural system of existence that is practice of hunting and gathering, zero or negative population growth and extremely low level of literacy in comparison with other tribal groups.

Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India (GOI) in (2015) at the conclusion of the Eighth Five-Year Plan, identified a total of 75 groups as PTG. In 2006 the Government of

India proposed to rename "Primitive tribal group" as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group"(PVTG).

A.3. Irular Tribe

The Irular Tribe are found only in India and their total population is 2,48,00,0. Their population in Tamil Nadu is 2,06,00,0. They speak the Irular language. Alternate names for the Irular tribe are- Eralolu, Eravallon, Erlar, Erukular, Illigaru, Iraliga, Irava, Irla, Irula, Irulan, Iruliga, Iruligar, Kattu Kapari, Poojari, Poosari, Pujari, Shikari, Veda, Vedar, Vedars, Vettaikaran, Villi Erlar, Villierular, Yerakalar and Yerukular.

The Irulas are found mainly in the southern and eastern slopes of the Nilgiri hills. They are generally considered to have drifted to the Nilgiris from the hilly terrains of Attapadi and Siruvani valleys in Kerala and the adjoining Anaikatti area in Coimbatore. The Irulas are sub-divided into the following groups:

Pongkaru, Kudagar Kalkatti, Vellaka, Devala and Koppillingam. Marriage ties are rather loose. The Irula marriage and funeral ceremonies are simple. Marriages are followed by feast and dance, and some Kurumbas are invited. Irulas are said to worship Vishnu in their own temple. There are many traditions concerning their power over wild beasts.

They are accredited with being able to tame tigers, and the fable goes that the women when in the woods leave their children in the care of a tiger. Their occupation is cultivation of small patches close by their village raising Ragi, Saamai, (all cereals), plantains, oranges, jack fruit, pumpkins, etc. They rarely trade on the plateau, but go down to towns in the plains with their produce like fruits, honey bee-wax, market gum, dyes, etc. They also hunt and snare wild animals

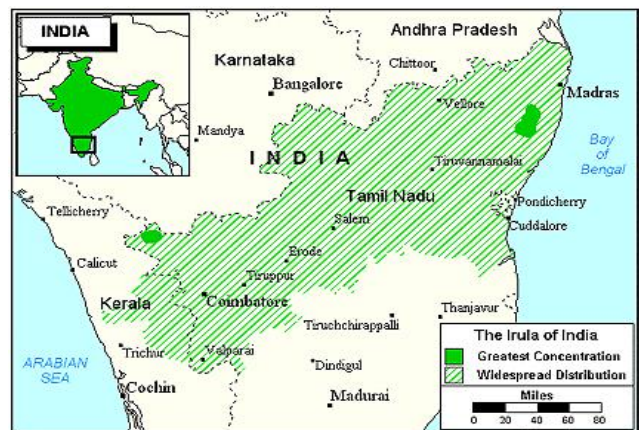


Figure 1. Habitats of Irula Tribes in India

Saheb (2011) found in his study that four per cent of Irular were Christians and 13 per cent of Irular women were widows. Fertility rates, death rate, birth rate, infant mortality rate

of Irular in isolated areas were higher than that of the Irular of exposed areas. Anomalies, disabilities and illness were higher in isolated group (55%) than exposed group (11%).

Balgir (2004) investigated that although scheduled tribes are accorded special status under the fifth/sixth schedules of the Indian Constitution, their status on the whole, especially their health still was found to remain unsatisfactory. Tribal communities in general and primitive tribal groups in particular are highly disease prone. Also they do not have required access to basic health facilities. They are most exploited, neglected, and highly vulnerable to diseases with high degree of malnutrition, morbidity and mortality. Their misery is compounded by poverty, illiteracy, ignorance of causes of diseases, hostile environment, poor sanitation, lack of safe drinking water and blind beliefs, etc.

Saravanakumar et al., (2014) conducted a study to analyze the prevalence of anemia and thinness among Irular adolescent girls in Thiruvallur district and found it was 58 per cent and 63.5 per cent respectively and severity of both increased with age. Other health problems such as typhoid (8%), HIV (3%) were reported in Irular of Marakkanam (Gnanasekaran 2012). Studies also found the prevalence of Syphilis among irulas in Gummidipundi (4%) and Marakkanam (10%) reports Kanthesh (2004).

Santhosam (2013) attempted to analyze the income of Irula tribes and the elderly tribes were taken as the parameter to determine the health status of the respondents. As per the data except one fourth of the respondents, the rest of them belonged to lower economic group. The elderly women, most of them were housewives and had no income. They depended on their children for food and shelter and all the other needs. The economic status of the widows (30%) was very pathetic. Nearly 46.66 per cent of the elderly women were housewives taking care of the grandchildren and attending to household chores. The women who were agriculture coolies (10%) and construction workers (10%) also were employed on daily wages and employed only for 30-50 days per year. Other days they remained idle at home attending to household chores. Cattle and poultry rearing were common among Irular tribe and was protected by 70 per cent of the families which also enabled extra income through selling milk, milk products, eggs and meat (Dhevi and Mani, 2014).

Baskar and Karthikeyan (2015) examined the socio economic aspect of tribes and reported that majority of the respondents' (71.7%) family type was nuclear, for 90 per cent occupation was daily wages and 91.7 per cent of their children were studying in schools.

About 36.7 per cent of the respondent's income was between Rs.2000-2500, while for 28.3 per cent it was between Rs.3600-4500/-. The respondents felt that their income level was inadequate to meet their basic needs.

B. Status quo of Tribal Women

The status of women in a society is a significant reflection of the level of social justice in that society (Ghosh, 1987). The Dhebar Commission Report (1961) had mentioned that a tribal woman is found to be exercising a relatively free and firm hand in all aspects related to her social life unlike in nontribal societies.

Kumar (2009) concludes that the contribution of women and their role in the family as well as in the economic development and social transformation are pivotal. Women constitute 90 per cent of total marginal workers of the country. Rural and tribal women who are engaged in agriculture form 78 per cent of all women in regular work.

In their report, Sen and Kumar (2001) assert that the issue of women's rights is a central tenet of political and development discourse in India. Even so, there is no denying that there are huge gaps between Constitutional guarantees and the daily realities of women's lives. As far as women's autonomy goes, they highlight that, in Madhya Pradesh, only 19 per cent of women do not need permission to go to the market. Even worse, only 17 per cent can visit relatives without their family's or husband's permission. Only 37 per cent of women are involved in decisions involving their own health care, only 49 per cent women have access to money in the household.

Women consume less food but work more states Hazarika (2011) and hence are found too weak. Therefore, from the health point of view, women folk who are weaker are to be made stronger. Another problem is that workplace harassment of women. For these reasons, they require empowerment of all kinds in order to protect themselves and to secure their purity and dignity. There is a need to formulate reducing feminized poverty, promoting education of women, and prevention and elimination of violence against women.

Among many tribal communities, predominance of matriarchal families could be found. Contrary to patriarchal societies, status of women is found to be higher in matriarchal families. Various studies (Mitra, 2007; Roy, 2012) have suggested that the Garo and Khasi tribes of the North East India assign relatively higher position to women due to the system of matrilineal descent, matrilocal residence and inheritance of property through the female line.

Chatterjee (2014) pinpoints that the status of tribal women is not same in all places, rather they vary according to the tribal group and the social structure. However, in tribal societies, tribal women are more important than women in any other social groups because tribal women are very hard working and in almost all the tribal communities they participate in economic and the family economy and income also depend on women. Yet, it is a hard reality that the tribal women still are lagging behind in many respects and they have to face many challenges. Their low level of economic activities, social backwardness, low level of literacy, poor health conditions reduces their status.

They participate in all agricultural activities (except ploughing) and other sectors of indigenous cottage industries (Bhasin, 2007). They share major responsibilities in the production process. In addition, they have to manage household chores, which is a stupendous task. Looking after the house, children and cattle and major portion of the agriculture is done by women. Chaudhary (2010) observes that in the tribal areas of Madhya Pradesh, collection and marketing of firewood is generally the domain of tribal women.

Hema Srikumar (2018) observes that a significant number of women are working as casual labourers and agricultural labourers (37%). Amongst those who are not in workforce, the employable age group of 25 to 45 years comprises of 13 per cent and most of them are (85%) women and as housewives they are not in workforce. If motivated and provided option to work at their own convenient time close to their place of living, this segment can very well form part of the workforce.

Burnman (2012) reckons that the tribal women in India have virtually no role to play in the social and political spheres. Women do not play role in village councils, traditional panchayats due to the mandatory provisions of the State, only some women are being elected in the 22 panchayats. Nevertheless, even in such cases, usually husbands or relatives who already wielded enough power in the locality dictate the women.

Haseena, (2014) perceives that in most of the tribal societies in Kerala women enjoy equal status with men and are the cornerstone of the social structure of the tribal societies. They enjoy certain economic and social equalities and are equal partners in family and conjugal rights. But they do not enjoy pre-marital freedom. Even though they have an important position in tribal society, they are debarred from exercising power over land, performing poojas, sacrifices and other customary religious practices. They also do not hold any property as these are always vested with the males.

Aerthayil, (2008) deduce that in many socioeconomic characteristics, tribal women lag behind tribal men. They are - literacy rate (illiteracy rate was 32% for men and 41% for women), education at the school level and proportion of widows (widows are 10% compared to widowers at 2%). About 45 per cent of women were unemployed, whereas only 32 per cent of the men were unemployed. The average pay for women was lesser than for men which led to a lesser quality of life for women.

. There are wide variations across regions and tribes state Awais et al. (2009) in terms of work participation, sex ratio, economic productivity, and social life among tribal populations. Nevertheless, they argue that without any healthy and productive tribal women, the tribal societies cannot have productive settled agriculture.

Ratnakar (2017) supports the argument that tribal women work as men's partners in agriculture, yet their status remains the same. Tribal women work very hard for the livelihood of the family but live a poor life, in spite of their many contributions in the house and on the farm. Tribal women are important for the improvement and progress of tribals. They are the pivot of tribal agriculture, performing many household and agricultural jobs. Without them, tribal welfare in agriculture is meaningless.

Undoubtedly, the programmes, oriented towards the empowerment of tribal, particularly women, have improved their socio-economic conditions and status. The impact of development planning needs to be evaluated in terms of desired and unanticipated consequences.

C. Sustainable Development of Tribal – Rhetoric and Reality

The concept of “sustainability” and “Sustainable Development” is a catch word for the policy makers both at the national and international arena that are not self-evident. The concept of sustainability originates from the Latin word “sustinere” which means “to hold up”, “to endure”. Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary describes sustainability as “to give support” to “keep up”.

India has integrated sustainable development in planning process and has several programs directed towards this goal. Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD 2005) pronounced that India adopted a new paradigm of thinking and experience of development post Stockholm Conference of 1972 called Sustainable Development (SD), following which, India became a part of 187 countries agreeing on carrying out an important

commitment towards SD by signing the Rio Declaration during 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development. Since then the concept of sustainable development is adopted such that the country and society can meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs and the level of growth rates is commensurate with social, economic and environment development

“Sustainable Development does not imply absolute limits to growth and it is not a new name of environmental protection. The concept leads a unique meaning to development and sets an integrated target for the measurement of development which has a combination of parameters including economic status, poverty, education, health, women empowerment, harmony, physical connectivity and environmental aspects”.

- Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam

Pearce (1990) defines Sustainable Development as “a situation in which the development vector that is, the vector of desirable social objectives that include access to resources, as well as increases in real income per capita, improvement in health and nutritional status, educational achievement fairer distribution of income and increases in basic freedom does not decrease over time.” Joshi (2001) defines it as the most objective and potentially measurable criteria for Sustainable Development is the preservation of the productivity and the full functioning of the resource base.

Lipschutz (1991) suggests the following definition of Sustainable Development as a broad notion that human consumption of resources and environmental services must be sustainable and should not exceed the capacity of the biosphere/environment -possibly in conjunction with technology and social organization - to supply those resources or absorb waste products. That is, ‘natural’ stocks and flows of goods and services must not be degraded or damaged to the point that they collapse or disappear.

Sustainable Development simply means a form of economy that does not undermine the capacity of the earth and all its component parts to provide both nurture and the basic resource needs for all living matter, including human beings(O’Riordan, 1991).

Abbot (1996-97) has described the concept of Sustainable Development favours open economic relations and economic growth, because poverty is a prime cause of environmental degradation and growth provides greater resources and environmental protection.

Pearce, (1989) in sum, Sustainable Development ensures continuing growth and progress for humankind, whilst arresting and changing those processes which cause irreversible damage to the environment, it exposes a concern which focuses on human need rather than human want.

India is land of more than 124 crore population endowed with rich human resource state Kumar et.al, (2011). The core strength of India is its man power, which is inbound strength. Out of the total population of the country, the strength of women is almost half of it. If India wants to achieve the Vision 2020 given by Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, former President of India, if India wants to be a super power & a nation to reckon with on the global map, it directly needs to create equal opportunities to its largest strength - Human Resource. No country can dream of becoming a developed nation where half of its population is deprived of opportunity. No country can think of becoming an economic super power, where half of its population is idle and not contributing anything to the growth of a country. As a country, we have to offer equal opportunity for overall development and growth. It should be an inclusive growth rather than a growth subjected to one gender, one race or sect. If growth of a nation has to be sustainable, then it should be inclusive growth. Otherwise it would not be possible to sustain growth for a long period.

There are several definitions of the term “sustainability” (United Nations, 1987). While some have defined sustainability in relation to the ability of man to preserve the available natural resources and not overuse the resources in a way that it will be deficient in the future; others have defined it in relation to policy making. But the definition given by the UN Commission on Economic Development in its 1987 Brundtland Report seems to be generally acceptable. In its report titled Our Common Future, sustainability is defined as that which “meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own goals”, more similar to UNESCO’s definition of 2010.

Taylor (2002), in his critic of the UN definition argued that it is often difficult to determine the future needs of people in the next generation which may be different from the present needs of people. He further added that the way the developed countries view the concept of needs, is completely different from the views of that of the developing countries..

In the course of tribal development approaches in the post independent India, the Fifth Five Year Plan may be mentioned as the turning point for the launching of Integrated Tribal Development Programme (ITDP) in 1972. The main aim of ITDP was to bring the fruits of development to tribal areas. During the Sixth plan, emphasis was placed more on family oriented programmes than on infrastructure development. Thus, from the Sixth Plan period it was becoming a target group approach where individual families were to benefit specially from the programme. During the Seventh plan, Tribal Development with ITDP

pattern was continued without any basic changes in the approach, pattern or structure. In this plan period thirty lakh tribal families were assisted to build up their economic base. The Eighth Five Year Plan gave emphasis on development of essential infrastructure facilities to achieve the objective of assisting the targeted number of tribal families to cross the poverty line and to increase their access to health, education and employment opportunities. These families were selected on the basis of their absolute economic status, the poorest being given the first preference (Begum, 2015).`

Women are the most valuable form of human capital in society. According to Agenda 21 of the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, (1992) improvement in the status of women is essential to ensure sustainable development.

The Draft Approach Paper (DAP) to the 12th Plan (2012-17) had recognized many deficiencies in development of STs and raised concerns over the weaknesses in the process of implementation of policies and programmes meant for these communities. It expanded on devising a new system in the 12th Plan to overcome the past difficulties experienced in Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP).

Tribal land alienation is the most important cause of the pauperization of the tribal people and their unsustainable livelihoods (Bhubaneswar Knowledge Trust, 2007). Shifting cultivation has also been severely restricted. The tribal are systematically deprived of their cultivable holdings, by non-tribal and even by Government for various projects and industries.

Bandi (2015) in his study presented an interesting blend of conservation and exploitation of the forests. Despite measures taken to prevent depletion in the past, the destruction of forests had continued. This has not only destroyed the traditional institutions of managing forests, but had also caused gross ecological imbalances. The forest policy in India, with its colonial attributes, continues to look upon forest-dependent communities not only as aliens in their own lands ignoring their rights, but even treats them as destroyers of forests. The concept of community forest management (CFM) appeared towards the end of the 20th century. He further adds that, in many places, the community managing the forest themselves suffered from multiple handicaps.

C.1. Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP)

Belcher, (2003) reports Non Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) as a term first coined by de Beer and McDermott (1989) in a groundbreaking publication on the economic value of NTFPs in South East Asia.

Fernandes et.al (1985) point out that from earlier times, NTFP collection has been of great importance to the forest dweller's economy. But later, due to deforestation, degradation and commercialization, people were deprived of the produce on which they were dependent for their survival.

Tejaswi (2008) states that in India, out of the total land area of 329 million ha, only 77 million ha (22%) are classified as forests as against recommended forest coverage of 33 per cent. Around 50 per cent of forest revenues and 70 per cent of forest based export income of the country comes from NTFPs.

Twenty years ago, NTFPs were estimated to provide about 40 per cent of India's total official forest revenues and 55 per cent of forest-based employment (Tewari and Campbell, 1995). The number of forest dwellers who depend on NTFPs for sustenance and as a supplement to their income range from 50 million (Tejaswi, 2008), to nearly 100 million, state Panda et al (2010). Lukose (2004) observes that forest produce used to be a source of income, especially for women in olden times, but they are deprived of such source of income because forests have either been cut or strict laws have been enforced for the existing ones. Increased government control of forests affect the tribal economy adversely affecting tribal lives, particularly that of women states Naresh (2014). As attitudes regarding NTFPs improve at a rapid rate, the demand for NTFPs also grows.

Food was obtained from shifting cultivation and also from MFP like flowers and fruits collected from the forest. Extraction from herbs, roots and animals were used for medicine. All these efforts incurred an excessive workload on women. It is calculated the ratio of male: female investment in labour in shifting cultivation to be 100:136 days per year (Menon, 1987).

Sarkar (2006) reveals that because of the extensive felling of trees by vested interests, the distances between the villages and the forest areas had increased forcing the tribal women, including women in advanced stages of pregnancy, to walk longer distances in search of MFP and firewood. Women put in an average of 14 working hours per day as compared to nine hours put in by men. The over strain on tribal women however, was not adequately compensated due to the non-availability of MFP and decrease in food grain production. As a result of deforestation, additional distance and less fertile soil, the availability of food for the tribal family was reduced. This had implications particularly for

the housewife who was responsible for the provision and distribution of food, in cases of shortage; she even deprived herself of food in order to feed the others. Appointing of agents from outside for collecting forest produce has not only affected their livelihood, but has also made the work of women more difficult. The result has been less income combined with less fuel wood available for themselves and lesser nutrition. It also leaves them with little time for earning wages. Government control over forests has also reduced hunting to a ritual.

Nadkarni (2000) presented the relationship between poverty, environment and development. For him, it is quite complex and not amenable to easy generalization. He developed a vicious circle (poverty-environment-degradation-more poverty). In a country like India, the environment is a source of livelihood for many, particularly for the poor. He concluded that environmental degradation was the main reason for the poverty among tribal.

The nature and dynamics of tribal economy in India is slowed down, opines Chaudry (2010), due to institutional intervention, civil society initiatives, and other macro-micro factors. The functional and dysfunctional implications of the changing patterns of tribal economy adversely effects the quality of life of the tribal masses which calls for a comprehensive and sustainable development of tribal economy in the era of globalization, when interactions between tribal economy and outside forces have massively increased.

D. Empowerment of Tribal Women for Well – being Strategies

Women empowerment concept was introduced at the International Women's Conference in 1985 at Nairobi. Women's empowerment principally aims at enhancing their social functioning by a qualitative and quantitative change particularly in the field of education, health and employment which will bring the desired level of change.

The Government of India adopted the National Policy for the Empowerment of Women on 20th March 2001. The main objective of this policy was to bring about advancement, development and empowerment of women, to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and to ensure their active participation in all spheres of life and activities. Articles 15, 16, 39, and 42 of the Indian Constitution have ensured the freedom to women in every sphere of life.

Mir and Tiwari (2017) explain that empowerment means a psychological sense of personal control or influence and a concern with actual social influence, political power and legal rights. It is a multi-level construct referring to individuals, organizations and

community. It is an international, ongoing process centered in the local community, involving mutual respect, critical reflection, caring and group participation, through which people lacking an equal share of valued resources gain greater access to the control over these resources.

Ghosh (1987) states the effects of women empowerment to create powerful influences on family, community norms, values, and finally the laws that govern the community. Household and inter-familial relations are the pivotal focus in the measurement of the level of women empowerment including political participation.

Shanthi and Rajalakshmi (2002) identify women's empowerment as distinct from the empowerment of other disadvantaged or socially excluded groups because women's disempowerment is caused and reinforced through household and family relations much more than what is true for the disempowerment of other socially disadvantaged groups. Their study measured the tribal women's empowerment needs in the areas of personal autonomy, family decision making, and domestic consultation within household and political process. It requires that the basic needs are met, that individuals have a sense of purpose and that they feel able to achieve important personal goals and participate in society (Steuer and Marks, 2008)

Empowerment should be extremely induced so that women can exercise a level of autonomy. More and more rural women need to be involved in self-employment. Self-employment in agriculture, village and small industries and retail trade and services should be expanded. Self-employment is also conducive to the development of individual initiative and entrepreneurial talent and offers greater personal freedom (Mazumdar and Ahmed, 2015). Since women empowerment closely interacts with the socioeconomic realities, it cannot be studied in isolation, states Justin et.al (2009). Developing a systematic knowledge base for empowerment needs of tribal women in India for their greater community participation is a critical need for designing developmental, health and welfare programmes and policies in the country.

Sahay (1998) observes that empowerment could be possible by outlining the mechanisms and tools that influence women empowerment, decision- making process, and multidimensional process that enable women to realize their full identity and powers in all walks of life.

Education is the key which opens the door of life, develops humanity and promotes national and self-development, state Suresh and Padma (2005). Education can be an effective tool for women empowerment. It enables the tribal women to acquire knowledge for improving and empowering their tasks in all fields but the level of education of the tribal women in general is very low. So it should be encouraged through special literacy and educational programmes.

Nachimuthu and Gunatharan (2012) conducted a study to measure the strength of SHGs and other form of enterprises in empowering women. Results indicated that women entrepreneurs in SHGs are more empowered than other (Non SHG) entrepreneurs. Economic empowerment of women is being regarded as a sine-qua-non of progress for a country and hence, the issue of economic empowerment of women is of paramount importance to political thinkers and reformers (Sathiabama 2010). According to Jahed et al (2011) women's economic empowerment is an inevitable part of economic development discourse in any development undertaking of a nation.

Bharathamma and Angadi (2005) noted that education, land holding, income of the family, social participation, mass media participation and number of trainings undergone to show highly significant association with empowerment whereas, age, marital status, caste, family type, family size and material possession had no significant association with empowerment of rural women.

Types of empowerment

'Empowerment' in general, what is usually being claimed is that it delivers one or (<https://www.involve.org.uk/sites/default/files/uploads/Activating-Empowerment.pdf>) more of the following:

- **De facto empowerment:** actual control or influence over an outcome or a decision
- **De jure empowerment:** power that is manifested in opportunities and rights provided through law, contract or other official record; and
- **Subjective empowerment:** the feeling of being able to influence/control/affect a situation.

Through analysis of the **behavioral concepts of the individuals** – reflection, reflexivity etc. as D'Cruz *et.al.*, (2007) propound, the status of empowerment can be deciphered.

In presenting different meanings of the concept of **reflexivity**, D'Cruz et al (2006) have separated them into three categories as variations.

The first variation regards reflexivity as an individual's considered response to an immediate context and making choices for further direction. This variation is concerned with the ability of the individuals to process information and creates knowledge to guide life choices. Focus here is on an individual's response to his/her situation, particularly in terms of self-development and the choices available about the future course of his/her life.

Drawing on Giddens (1990), Ferguson (1997) proposes that the rapidity of social change presents both 'opportunities and dangers' for individuals as they actively engage with choices about, for example, marriage, work and intimacy (Elliott, 2001). Many of these opportunities are new and were not available to previous generations (Ferguson, 1997). (Ferguson, 2003) defines reflexivity as a competency, as 'the ability to act in the world and to critically reflect on our actions and in ways that may reconstitute how we act and even reshape the very nature of identity itself' (199).

The second variation defines reflexivity as an individual's self-critical approach that questions how knowledge is generated and, further, how relations of power operate in this process.

D.1. The Eco System Perspective

Ecosystems contribute to human well-being in various ways. Ecosystems provide the necessary resources of food, water, shelter, and energy. Also, they regulate the conditions (e.g. Temperature , water quality) in which people live, work, and play and, most fundamentally, underpin the basic processes (e.g., primary production) and cycles (e.g., carbon cycle, water cycle) that support life. Well-being is defined by Bornstein et al. (2003) as: "a state of successful performance throughout the life course integrating physical, cognitive and social-emotional function that results in productive activities deemed significant by one's cultural community, fulfilling social relationships, and ability to transcend moderate psychosocial and environmental problems"

It arises not only from the actions of individuals but from a host of collective good and relationships with other people. It requires that the basic needs are met, that individuals have a sense of purpose and that they feel able to achieve important personal goals and participate in society. It is enhanced by conditions that include supportive personal relationships, strong and inclusive communities, good health, financial and personal security, rewarding employment and a healthy and attractive environment (Steuer and Marks, 2008)

Measuring human well-being requires the subjective act of defining and creating models and measurements of that which defines health and quality of life. According to Sarvimaki (2006) this requires an opinion of what it means to be a "whole human being" as well as what is worthwhile in life, and how we ought to live. The report by the "Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress" (The Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi Report) identified eight key dimensions that should be taken into account when defining human well-being. These eight dimensions, to be considered simultaneously are: Material living standards (income, consumption and wealth); Health, Education; Personal activities including work; Political voice and governance; Social connections and relationships; Environment (present and future conditions) and Insecurity, of an economic as well as physical nature. The Report, and its findings, are founded on the belief that measuring human well-being goes beyond subjective self-reports and perceptions, and must include an objective measure of the extent of peoples' "opportunity set" and their capacity (or freedom) to choose from among these opportunities the life they value. Thus, the Report's findings are based upon the assumption that freedom of opportunity is an inherent feature of the measure of human well-being. Furthermore, the Report posits that the sustainability of well-being factors measured is an integral factor in terms of their worth (Sen et al., 2009)

The OECD's web-based interactive tool *Your Better Life Index* offers individuals the opportunity to create their own international well-being index, rating the importance of eleven different dimensions of well-being such as Housing, Income, Jobs, Community, Education, Environment, Civic, Engagement, Health, Safety, Life Satisfaction, and Work-Life Balance (OECD, 2011b)

The vital elements of physical well-being according to Bornstein et al. (2003) include good nutrition, preventive health care, physical activity, safety, security, substance abuse prevention and reproductive health. In contrast, individual may consider their lives regarding social well-being, and this includes a sense of belonging to one's communities (social integration), a positive attitude towards others or supportive relationship.

Schiff and Moore (2006) in their research study suggested and examined the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual domains of well-being, while, MEA (2005) uses five dimensions to assess human well-being about the ecosystem. These dimensions are designated as necessary materials for a good life, freedom and choice, health, social relation, and security

D.1. Empowerment of Tribal Women through Entrepreneurship

"Women Entrepreneur" is a person who accepts challenging role to meet her personal needs and become economically independent (Mazumdar and Ahmed, 2015). The Government of India has defined women entrepreneurs as enterprise owned and controlled by women having a minimum financial interest of 51 per cent of the capital and giving at least 51 per cent of the employment generated in the enterprise to women. In the simplest sense, women entrepreneurs are those women who take the lead and organize the business or industry and provide employment to others. Entrepreneurship development among rural women helps to enhance their personal capabilities and increase decision making status in the family and society as a whole.

Bharathi and Reddy (2013) reiterate that every country tries to achieve maximum economic development. The economic development of a country to a large extent depends on human resources. But human resources alone will not produce economic development - there must be dynamic entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs perform vital functions in economic development. Entrepreneurship plays a premium mobile role in industrial development. Industrial development through the medium of small scale units is initiated and nurtured by entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship influences the process of industrialization. Government therefore is providing much thrust on entrepreneurship to generate employment.

In India, the actual participation of women in income generating activities is quite unsatisfactory and only eight per cent of the small scale manufacturing units are owned and operated by women. In 2011, the number of women entrepreneurs in Tamil Nadu was 3,95,293 accounting for 15.23 percent of total entrepreneurs in India, report Pandian et al, (2012)

During the last two decades, increasing number of Indian women has entered the field of entrepreneurship and also they have gradually changing the face of business today. Of the total micro, small and medium enterprises in India women owned enterprises contribute 3.09 per cent of industrial output and employ over 8 million people. (Annual Report of the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, 2011).

Women Entrepreneurs need encouragement and support from their families, social circles and most importantly the Government. (Shashtri and Sinha, 2010). Government should make initiations to provide financial support to women entrepreneurs.

Shukla and Gupta (2012) express that entrepreneurship has been identified as an essential ingredient of economic development. They opined entrepreneurial process to be a major factor in economic development. Entrepreneurial activity is unquestionably considered as an engine of a key to economic growth and innovation. Women with varied social, economic, political, regional and linguistic backgrounds, demographically constitute half of the nation, but are much more when their contribution towards development of family and the nation is considered. Participation of women in all the areas of production and economic growth is significant.

Savitha and Rajashekar (2012) analyzed that the self-help groups have emerged as an alternative development strategy to promote the common interest of the weak particularly the rural poor. Their research undertook to study the role of self-help groups on the development of women entrepreneurs in Mysore District, Karnataka State attempted to analyze the role of SHGs in promoting women entrepreneurs and evaluated the role and working of self-help groups in women entrepreneurship and has also assessed the perception of beneficiaries about the role of SHGs. They concluded that SHGs have served the cause of women empowerment through their own enterprises by getting support.

For Memon (2012) entrepreneurship is a key element of growth and development prospects for all the countries and it is most relevant to transition countries. A nation how so ever rich in material resources, cannot prosper if the resources are not put to productive use. For this purpose, energetic entrepreneurs are needed who can contribute effectively for national prosperity. The only solution is promotion and development of entrepreneurship aiming at making an individual a job provider and not a job seeker. Entrepreneurship has been a male-dominated phenomenon from the very early age but time has changed the situation and brought women as today's most developing entrepreneurs.

D.2. Women Entrepreneurship through Self Help Group – Success Stories

Gandhi and Udayakumari (2013) while assessing the role of SHGs in empowering women in Tamil Nadu found that the results showed Self Help Group scheme had attained popularity and had been successful towards the eradication of poverty and had empowered women economically in the State of Tamil Nadu.

Muthuselvi and Thangamani's (2013) findings on women empowerment through Self- Help Groups in Coimbatore District revealed that the factors which had motivated

women to become SHG members were enriching their savings (39%), attaining economic independence (21%) and achieving recognition from the society (15%).

Hemalatha (2012) in her study recommended that the Government should take necessary steps to provide all sorts of assistance in giving, motivation training and leadership training to encourage members to take up varied activities. Arrangements for marketing should also be widened so that easy marketing of produced articles is made possible

Rahman et. al.(2004) in their study found lack of time as the main constraint while 78, 64 and 55 per cent of the respondents highlighted inadequate compensation for the time spent, place of training centre far away from their home and lack of awareness about the training as major constraints which come in to their way in attending training programme respectively. Vimalarani and Kumaravel (2008) observed an increase in social recognition, family status and involvement in entrepreneurial activity

Durgaprasad and Madhuri (2004) in their study had highlighted the initiatives, successes and challenges relating to partnerships and networking for health development and projected that the bottom line of all prosperity and health in future would be vested in a development process and outcome that was essentially facilitated by what was called development partnerships and networks. The authors suggested that resource sharing was an important aspect of partnership and networking. They have also opined that critical care should be taken to ensure that communities, NGOs and government did not end up in an unhealthy competition because of resource scarcity.

A study conducted by Shirke and Mohite (2012) revealed that the entrepreneurs are the important segments of economic growth and development. Basically an entrepreneur is a person who is responsible for setting up a business or an enterprise. So women entrepreneurs may be defined as, a woman or a group of women, who establish, organize and operate a business enterprise. According to them, any woman or group of women who innovate, initiate or adopts an economic activity may be called a woman entrepreneur(s).

D.3. Problems of Women Entrepreneurs

D'Cruz (2003) revealed that the biggest problem for women entrepreneurs was reportedly in areas of procurement of raw materials and canvassing of orders. Habibi Roozbeh *et.al.*, (2014) noted that rural women entrepreneurs faced with problems such as

excessive dependence on intermediation, intense competition, high costs of production and low mobility.

Bahl (2012) explained that the entrepreneurship has gained greater significance at global level under changing economic scenario. Entrepreneurial skills are needed to improve the quality of life of individuals, families and communities and to sustain a healthy economy and environment. After independence, several entrepreneurship development programmes have been started to develop skill, knowledge and competence among the entrepreneurs. In spite of various entrepreneurship development programmes launched by the Govt. and NGOs, the entrepreneurs encounter a number of problems for establishing economically viable small-scale units. Women contribute significantly to the running of family businesses mostly in the form of unpaid effort and skills. Programmes meant to reach women entrepreneurs can succeed only if they take note of this paradox as well as of the familial and social conditioning that reduces the confidence, independence and mobility of women. Therefore, instead of just schemes (financial and developmental) as the carrot for entrepreneurship development intensive training needs to be provided to the women and youth in rural India and create an entrepreneurship training system as per integrated rural development program. Rural entrepreneurship is the answer to removal of rural poverty in India.

In the Indian Planning Commission, Central and State Governments had recorded that women should be in the mainstream of economic development. The Industrial policy of Government of India has painted out the need for entrepreneurship programs for women to enable them to start small scale industries. Even after 65 years of independence, women in India are struggling for entrepreneurial freedom. That is why women as entrepreneurial resource have not been widely recognized in India. There has been an increasing trend in number of women owned enterprises in India, but despite government efforts, substantial growth could not be achieved

In almost all the developed countries in the world women are putting their steps at par with the men in the field of business. Women are equally competent in running business but still lacks behind in spite of women empowerment movement in our country, there are social, cultural and economic hurdles in the way of women entrepreneurship and the major problem is lack of entrepreneurial environment. In spite of having the potential and talent, women are deprived of opportunities, information and education.

E. Governmental Strategies

The Constitution of India initiated the tribal welfare programmes by incorporating important provisions. These provisions not only put an end to the policy of indifference which had been followed during the pre-independence period, but also gave testimony to tribal welfare programmes, making them a constitutional obligation for the future governments of the country (Varghese, 2010).

The Government programmes for women development began as early as 1954 in India but the actual participation began only in 1974. In the study on Issues and Challenges of Women Empowerment in India, Shettar (2015) had highlighted over 34 schemes for women implemented by different Departments and Ministries of the Government of India. The Government has implemented various programmes which encourage tribal to take up new ventures. The assistance for the poor households of SCs/STs under the major programmes is as follows:

1. Rastria Mahila Kosh (RMK) 1992-1993
2. Mahila Samridhi Yojana (MSY) October, 1993.
3. Indira Mahila Yojana (IMY) 1995.
4. Women Entrepreneur Development programme 1997-98.
5. Mahila Samakhya .
6. Swayasjdha
7. Swa Shakti Group
8. Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP).
9. Swalamban.
10. Crèches/ Day care centre for the children of working and ailing mother.
11. Hostels for working women.
12. Swadhar.
13. National Mission for Empowerment of Women.
14. Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) (1975),
15. Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescence Girls (RGSEAG) (2010).
16. The Rajiv Gandhi National Crèche Scheme for Children of Working Mothers.
17. Integrated Child Protection scheme (ICPS) (2009-2010).
18. Dhanalakshmi (2008).
19. Short Stay Homes.
20. Ujjawala (2007).
21. Scheme for Gender Budgeting (XI Plan).
22. Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP).
23. Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM).
24. Prime Minister's Rojgar Yojana (PMRY).
25. Women's Development Corporation Scheme (WDCS).
26. Working Women's Forum.
27. Indira Mahila Kendra.

28. Mahila Samiti Yojana.
29. Khadi and Village Industries Commission.
30. Indira Priyadarahini Yojana.
31. SBI's Sree Shakti Scheme.
32. SIDBI's Mahila Udyam Nidhi Mahila Vikas Nidhi.
33. NGO's Credit Schemes.
34. National Banks for Agriculture and Rural Development's Schemes

National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NAREGA): NAREGA guarantees 100 days of employment in a financial year to any rural/tribal household whose adult members are willing to do unskilled manual work.

Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY): While the SGRY is open to all rural poor who are in need of wage employment, preference is given to SCs/STs and parents of child labourers withdrawn from hazardous occupations, who are below the poverty line. 22.5 per cent of the annual allocation (inclusive of food grains) at district and intermediate panchayat level is earmarked for individual/group beneficiary schemes of SC/ST families living below the poverty line. A minimum 50 per cent of the village panchayat allocation (inclusive of food grains) is for the creation of need based village infrastructure in SC/ST habitations/wards

Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY): The SGSY is a major self-employment programme being implemented all over the country. Its guidelines stipulate that at least 50 per cent of the Swarozgaris will be SCs/STs, 40 per cent women and 3 per cent persons with disability. For SCs/STs and the disabled, the subsidy limit is 50 per cent of the project cost subject to a maximum of Rs.10,000 respectively.

The Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY): is being implemented at national level to provide dwelling units to people below the poverty line living in rural areas. Preference is given to Below Poverty Line families belonging to SCs/STs.

National Rural Health Mission (2005- 2012): The Government of India launched the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) in April 2005 to provide effective healthcare to the rural population throughout the country with special focus on 18 States, with weak public health infrastructure and poor performance in demographic and health indicators. The efforts of government and its different agencies are ably supplemented by non-governmental organizations that are playing an equally important role in facilitating women empowerment.

The literature browsed enabled envisioning the concepts to be covered as major aspects in the study.