

Multidimensional Inequality and Deprivation Among Tribal Communities of Andhra Pradesh, India

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Abstract : The level of income inequality in India has been worrisome as the World Inequality Report termed it as a “poor and unequal country, with an affluent elite”. As important as income is to understand inequality and deprivation, it is just one dimension. But the historical roots and current realities of inequality and deprivation in India lies in many of the non-income dimensions such as housing, nutrition, education, agency, sense of inclusion etc. which are often ignored, especially in solution-oriented research. The level of inequality and deprivation among the tribal is one such case. There is a corpus of literature establishing that the tribal communities in India are disadvantageous on various grounds. Given their rural geography, issues of access and quality of basic facilities such as education and healthcare are often unaddressed. COVID-19 has further exacerbated this challenge and climate change will make it even more worrying. With this background, a succinct measurement tool at the village level is necessary to design short to medium-term actions with reference to risk mitigation for tribal communities. This research paper examines the level of inequality and deprivation among the tribal communities in the rural areas of Andhra Pradesh state of India using a Multidimensional Inequality and Deprivation Index based on the Alkire-Foster methodology. The methodology is theoretically grounded in the capability approach propounded by Amartya Sen, emphasizing on achieving the “beings and doings” (functionings) an individual reason to value. In the index, the authors have five domains, including Livelihood, Food Security, Education, Health and Housing and these domains are divided into sixteen indicators. This assessment is followed by domain-wise short-term and long-term solutions.

Keywords : Andhra Pradesh, Alkire-Foster methodology, deprivation, inequality, multidimensionality, poverty, tribal

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