

Tribal Food Security Assessment and Its Measurement Index: A Study of Tribes and Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups in Jharkhand, India

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Abstract : Food security is an important issue that has been widely discussed in literature. However, there is a lack of research on the specific food security challenges faced by tribal communities. Tribal food security refers to the ability of indigenous or tribal communities to consistently access and afford an adequate and nutritious supply of food. These communities often have unique cultural, social, and economic contexts that can impact their food security. The study aims to assess the food security status of all thirty-two major tribes, including Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) people living in various blocks of Jharkhand State. The methodology of this study focuses on measuring the food security index of indigenous people by developing and redefining a new Tribal Food Security Index (TFSI) as per the indigenous community-level indicators identified by the Global Food Security Index and other indicators relevant to food security. Affordability, availability, quality and safety, and natural resources were the dimensions used to calculate the overall Tribal Food Security Index. A survey was conducted for primary data collection of tribes and PVTGs at the household level in various districts of Jharkhand with a considerable tribal population. The result shows that due to the transition from rural to urban areas, there is a considerable change in TFSI and a decrease in forest dependency of tribal communities. Socioeconomic factors like occupation and household size had a significant correlation with TFSI. Tribal households living in forests have a higher food security index than tribal households residing in urban transition areas. The study also shows that alternative methodology adopted to measure specific community-level food security creates high significant impact than using commonly used indices.

Keywords : indigenous people, tribal food security, particularly vulnerable tribal groups, Jharkhand

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