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Impact of Janjatiya Gaurav Pakhwada on Tribal Communities in Chhattisgarh: Policy Evaluation, Cultural Preservation, and Socioeconomic Development

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Abstract

This study evaluates the impact of Janjatiya Gaurav Pakhwada on tribal communities in Chhattisgarh, India, focusing on cultural pride, socioeconomic development, and policy implementation. Using mixed-methods—including literature review, secondary data analysis, and field observations in Bastar—the research assesses the effectiveness of central and state initiatives such as EMRS schools, MFP procurement programs, and cultural campaigns. Findings indicate increased cultural participation and awareness, though challenges remain in accessibility and sustainability. Evidence-based recommendations are provided for improved outcomes.

Key Words: *Janjatiya Gaurav Pakhwada, tribal development, Chhattisgarh, policy evaluation, cultural preservation, socioeconomic empowerment*

1. Introduction

Chhattisgarh is among the most tribal-dominated states in India, with Scheduled Tribes constituting approximately **30.6 percent** of its total population. The state is home to culturally rich tribal communities such as the Gond, Muria, Maria, Halba, and Dhurwa, particularly concentrated in the Bastar division. Despite this cultural vibrancy, tribal communities continue to face structural challenges, including poverty, educational exclusion, livelihood insecurity, and limited access to state welfare mechanisms.

In this context, *Janjatiya Gaurav Pakhwada* has emerged as a significant national initiative aimed at recognizing tribal contributions, strengthening cultural identity, and promoting awareness of

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constitutional rights and government welfare schemes. Observed annually, the Pakhwada integrates cultural celebrations with policy outreach and public engagement.

Drawing upon the author's long-term engagement as a Tribal Research Officer and anthropologist in Bastar, this study seeks to examine whether the symbolic and programmatic objectives of Janjatiya Gaurav Pakhwada translate into measurable cultural, educational, and livelihood outcomes for tribal communities in Chhattisgarh.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Cultural Identity and Social Cohesion

Scholars emphasize that tribal identity in India is deeply embedded in language, ritual practices, ecological knowledge systems, and collective memory (Xaxa, 2001). Cultural pride functions not only as a symbolic asset but also as a mechanism for social cohesion, political assertion, and intergenerational knowledge transmission. State-sponsored cultural recognition, when inclusive, can enhance participation and strengthen community confidence.

2.2 Socioeconomic Development Programs

Government interventions such as EMRS schools, MFP procurement schemes, and scholarship programs have been designed to address structural disadvantages faced by tribal populations. Studies indicate that while these initiatives contribute to improved literacy levels and income security, outcomes vary significantly across regions due to differences in governance capacity, infrastructure, and community participation (TRIFED, 2024).

2.3 Policy Implementation Challenges

Policy effectiveness in tribal areas is often constrained by geographic remoteness, limited administrative reach, weak monitoring frameworks, and sustainability concerns (Singh & Sahu, 2022). Without local participation and culturally sensitive implementation strategies, development programs risk becoming symbolic rather than transformative.

2.4 Author's Previous Research

The author's earlier works (Kavi, 2015; 2018; 2019) provide empirical insights into Bastar Dussehra, school dropout dynamics, parental migration, and tribal development patterns. These studies contribute a longitudinal and ethnographic perspective that informs the present analysis.

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3. Objectives of the Study

The study aims to:

1. Evaluate the impact of Janjatiya Gaurav Pakhwada on tribal cultural pride and identity formation
2. Assess the effectiveness of government initiatives in education, livelihood, and cultural preservation
3. Identify structural challenges and implementation gaps
4. Provide evidence-based recommendations for strengthening tribal policy outcomes

4. Methodology

4.1 Research Design

A **mixed-methods approach** was adopted, combining quantitative data analysis with qualitative anthropological insights.

4.2 Data Sources

- Government reports from the Tribal Welfare Department, Chhattisgarh, and the Ministry of Tribal Affairs
- DISE and UDISE+ data on school enrollment and dropout rates in Bastar
- Secondary data from TRIFED and national media reports
- Field-based observations and ethnographic documentation by the author

4.3 Analytical Framework

Data were analyzed through comparative assessment of program reach, participation levels, and outcomes. Case-based illustrations were used to highlight best practices as well as systemic gaps in policy delivery.

5. Results

5.1 Educational Impact

EMRS schools have contributed to increased enrollment among tribal students, particularly girls. Scholarship schemes further incentivized attendance. However, dropout rates remain a concern, driven by migration, language barriers, and insufficient mentoring support (India Today, 2025).

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5.2 Livelihood and Economic Impact

MFP procurement programs have provided income security to tribal households, with Chhattisgarh contributing nearly **72 percent** of national MFP procurement (TRIFED, 2024). Nevertheless, challenges related to equitable benefit distribution, value addition, and market access persist.

5.3 Cultural Preservation and Community Pride

Janjatiya Gaurav Pakhwada has led to increased participation in traditional dance, music, festivals, and handicrafts. Public recognition has enhanced cultural confidence. However, mechanisms for sustained intergenerational transmission of knowledge remain limited.

5.4 Key Challenges Identified

- Geographic isolation and infrastructural constraints
- Weak monitoring and evaluation frameworks
- Cultural initiatives often remaining symbolic rather than economically integrated

6. Discussion

The findings suggest that Janjatiya Gaurav Pakhwada has positively influenced cultural pride and social awareness among tribal communities in Chhattisgarh. When aligned with education and livelihood programs, cultural initiatives can serve as catalysts for broader empowerment. However, without robust monitoring, participatory planning, and economic integration, the long-term impact remains constrained.

7. Recommendations

1. Strengthen EMRS schools through mentoring, digital learning tools, and dropout prevention strategies
2. Enhance MFP programs by expanding market access, value-chain development, and income diversification
3. Integrate cultural initiatives with skill development, entrepreneurship, and sustainable tourism
4. Establish comprehensive monitoring frameworks across education, health, livelihood, and cultural indicators
5. Prioritize high-density tribal blocks for targeted interventions

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8. Conclusion

Janjatiya Gaurav Pakhwada has emerged as a meaningful platform for enhancing cultural awareness and pride among tribal communities in Chhattisgarh. When complemented by education and livelihood policies, it contributes to multidimensional empowerment. Ensuring accessibility, sustainability, and evidence-based policy integration is essential for realizing its full transformative potential.

9. References

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