

# THE DENOTIFIED TRIBES OF INDIA: TEXT AND CONTEXT

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**Abstract:** Some tribes in India, known for their criminal propensities have been declared as criminal tribes under the Criminal Tribes Act of 1871. After Independence, the Criminal Tribes Act was repealed in 1952 and these groups came to be known as 'Denotified communities'. The Denotified Tribes (DNTs) of India represent a historically marginalized and stigmatized segment of society. Originally branded as "criminal tribes" under British colonial rule, these communities were subjected to systemic discrimination and surveillance. Despite being "Denotified" post-Independence, the legacy of criminalization persists, manifesting in socio-economic exclusion and police harassment. The objective of this paper is to give an overview on the history and characteristics of these Denotified Tribes and throw light on the various theories behind their criminal behavior. This paper also focuses on the efforts of the government towards promoting social justice for these tribes. Data and information from various secondary sources were collected, collated and analyzed for the purpose of writing this paper.

**Keywords:** Criminal Tribes; DNTs; Tribes; Law; Nomads; PVTGs.

## INTRODUCTION

The Idate Commission Report (2017) based on the survey done in twenty-nine states and seven union territories provides a rough estimate of the population of De-notified tribes (DNTs) and also the nomadic tribes to be fifteen crores (Idate, 2017). However, in order to get the exact figure of the population of DNTs there is a need of proper caste wise census enumeration of the groups. As the reason lies in the fact that construction of stigma of criminality was a systematic intervention introduced through colonial discourse, the integration of DNTs can be done through a systematic counter discourse of liberating knowledge from a social sciences point of view, which shall be an attempt in the proceeding sections of the article.

Some of them are included in the list of Scheduled castes, some others in the Scheduled Castes, some others in the Scheduled Tribes, and quite a few in Other Backward Classes. But there are many of these tribes which find place in none of the above. What is common to all these Denotified and Nomadic Tribes is the fate of being branded as 'born' criminals.

Denotified tribes were of two kinds which may broadly be classified into nomadic groups and settled communities. The nomadic group includes gypsy like people, while the settled and the semi – settled groups trace their from descent irregular fighting clans, who were uprooted from their

original homes on account of invasions or political upheavals in the distant past. Before settlement in colonies, they used to make a living out of hunting, snake charming, selling medicinal herbs and other goods. The innate spirit of adventure coupled with extreme poverty, lack of openings for better economic conditions and also other psychological factors led them to take to criminal practices which later became a tradition and a part of their heritage (Kumar, 2020).

The criminality of these tribes was a social product and it did not evolve over night. It was neither inherited quality nor was it planned with malicious intention. Most of the criminal tribes seem to be original inhabitants of the respective areas in which they lived. Most of them adopted Hindu practices with tribal identity. Some embraced Islam and other turned to other cults. All these people gradually, after a generation or so, identified themselves as tribal criminals.

But when legally recognized as tribal criminals in the year of 1871, after the enactment of the Criminal Tribes Act in that year, these tribals lost their lands and properties to foreign invaders such as Aryans, Dravidians and Muslims. They became helpless, hapless and hopeless due to the defeat by the invaders. Having lost their lands and properties, they were left with no source of income, and therefore resorted to illegal means for earning a livelihood. These people had no particular profession, but they lived by means of nefarious activities. Socio – economic conditions of these

Denotified tribes are responsible for becoming the criminals. Though originally, they were not criminals, were a period of time through changing circumstances, they became poor. As such they were forced to take up certain activities which were easy for earning their livelihood. And gradually caste system strengthened and the exclusive groups have been developed, thus keeping them in their social groups continuing their criminal activities (Kumar, 2020).

The story of the DNTs goes back to the early years of the colonial rule. In those times, whoever opposed the British colonial expansion was perceived as a potential criminal. Particularly, if any attempts were made to oppose the government by the use of the arms, the charge of criminality was a certainty. Many of the wandering minstrels, fakirs, petty traders, rustic transporters and disbanded groups of soldiers were included by the British in their list of criminal groups. During the first half of the nineteenth century, the tribes in the North West frontier had been declared 'criminal tribes'.

This category became increasingly open ended and by 1871 the British had prepared an official list of Criminal Tribes. An act to regulate criminal tribes was passed that year. For instance, Bhils who had fought the British rule in Kandesh and on the banks of Narmada and were convicted under section 110 of the IPC were to be recognised as criminal tribes.

In the Criminal Tribes Act of 1871, the Government proceeded on three basic assumptions: First, all persons born in a particular group or caste would become criminals from the birth because they take up the father's profession; Second, when once they learn such law violating behavior, they will always continue to be criminals because they believe it to be a profession; and Third, because of continuous criminal practices, they become hardened criminals (Kumar, 2020)

By 1921, the CT Act had been extended to cover numerous other tribes in Madras Presidency, Hyderabad and Mysore. Thus, about the time Indian politics saw the emergence of Mahatma Gandhi as the leader of the freedom struggle, the Indian society mutely witnessed the emergence of a new class of people who were branded as born criminals.

Soon after Independence, the communities notified as criminal tribals were Denotified by the Government. The Criminal Tribes Act was repealed in 1949 and thus 'de-notified' the tribal communities. This Act, however, was replaced by a series of Habitual Offenders Acts, that asked police to investigate a suspect's "criminal tendencies" and whether their occupation is "conducive to settled way of life." The Denotified tribes were reclassified as "habitual offenders" in 1959.

The HOAs preserved most of the provisions of the former CT Acts, except the premise implicit in it that an entire community can be 'born' criminal. Apparently, the denotification and the passing of the HOAs should have ended the misery of the communities penalised under the CT Act. But that has not happened. The police force, as well as the people in general, were taught to look upon the 'Criminal Tribes' as born criminals during the colonial times.

The UN's anti-discrimination body committee on the elimination of racial discrimination asked India to repeal the Habitual Offenders Act (1952) and effectively rehabilitate the Denotified and nomadic tribes on 9 March 2007, for around 110 million people belonging to the Denotified tribes, nomadic or semi-nomadic tribes in India.

In contemporary times, though the repeal of criminal tribe legislation provided a new recognition to the de-notified tribes, the stigma of criminality over them still prevails and put an immense impact on their identity in contemporary time too (Bokil & Raghavan, 2016, p.150). The presence of the DNTs in the society is still viewed in a stereotypical manner whereby they are still considered as criminals or some notion of illegality or disrepute is attached to them (Radhakrishna, 2009, pp.1-17). In such context it has created a situation in the postcolonial context whereby the identity imposed by the colonial administration primarily on the sections of the nomadic society, in a way has become their original identity eliminating major possibilities of addressing their cultural life and historical discrimination as compared to the other marginalized groups such as Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), and Other Backward Classes (OBCs). Moreover, though de-notified emerged as an identity of the ex-criminal tribes, their exclusive categorization by the state never happened as one, and they were

largely brought into the list of SC, ST or OBC and in some cases none. In rare states such as Maharashtra the exclusive categorization is done as Vimukta Jati Nomadic Tribe (VJNT), but not all ex-criminal tribe groups are included under the said category. As a culturally and socially Despite eliminating the category 'criminal tribe' officially from the government registers and police records, the perception of the society as well as the administrative officials regarding the de-notified tribe remained unchanged (Bokil, 2002, pp.148-154). That attitude continues to persist even today. One does not know if the police training academies in India still teach the trainees that certain communities are habitually criminal; but surely the CT Act is a part of the syllabus leading to the discussion of crime-watch. The result is that every time there is a petty theft in a locality, the DNTs in the neighborhood become the first suspects. The ratio between the arrests and the convictions of the DNTs needs to be analysed to see the extent of the harassment caused by the police to these most vulnerable and the weakest sections of our society.

The land possessed by the criminal tribes was already alienated during the colonial rule. After independence, various state governments have done little to restore their land to them. Schemes for economic upliftment do not seem to have benefited them. The illiteracy rate among the DNTs is higher than among the SCs or the STs, malnutrition's more frequent and provisions for education and health care almost negligible since most of the DNTs have remained nomadic in habit. And above all, there is no end to the atrocities that the DNTs have to face.

They hardly find space in the public discourse in contemporary society. They are largely the Nomadic communities which were notified as criminals under the Criminal Tribes Act (CTA), 1871. In the postcolonial context, the CTA was repealed in 1952 and the notified criminal tribes were de-notified. The de-notification officially erased the label of criminal from the identity of the notified criminal tribes during the colonial period, as they were de-notified from the list of notified criminal tribes. In the post-independence context therefore the category de-notified tribe happened to become a new identity of the groups criminalized through CTA during colonial rule. However, presence of DNTs in the society still stigmatizes their identity as criminals in contemporary India.

The rationale behind writing this paper is to understand the stigmas attached with the DNT and the theoretic framework on which their criminality can be analyzed.

The paper is divided into 6 sections. The first section is the general background to the topic including the historical background of the DNT. Section two deals with the characteristics of the DNT. The third section of the paper focuses on the theoretical text and context of crime amongst the DNT. In the fourth section throws light on some exemplary initiatives of the government in mainstreaming the DNT with the larger society. The final and the fifth section is the conclusion of the paper. The methodology used for the research paper is largely literature based with the aim to consolidate the historical and contemporary scenario of the DNT in India. The paper is mainly descriptive design in nature.

## CHARACTERISTIC OF DENOTIFIED TRIBES:

While there is anonymity and no uniformity in this discourse Rathod's (2000) characterization such as primitive traits, distinct cultural identity, nomadic way of life, geographical isolation, social backwardness, stigma and criminality is appreciable.

A majority of the Nomadic and Denotified tribes exhibit the primitive traits even today. They still live in tribal groups moving from place to place in caravans in search of livelihood. The various practices like worship of nature in different forms, animal sacrifices during religious ceremonies are only a few of them to demonstrate this fact. They have a rich heritage of culture that is distinctly different from other social groups and can be easily identified by their dress, dialect, folklore, customs and practices. From generation after generation, these tribes have had wandering traditions and they have hardly been integrated in the society. Their temporary settlements are known as pal or pada are rarely fit for human beings to stay. The society has always looked at them with mistrust and suspicion due to the stigma of criminality attached with them. In that sense they have been living a life of isolation from the rest of the society. Some of these tribes still prefer to stay near jungle, away from the villages.

The Nomadic and Denotified tribals have no means of production and livelihood as a result of which they have to move from village to village in the form of a caravan. Also, the children are deprived of education. They cannot take education through regular school systems in a settled society due to this unstable life style. They are left away from the mainstream of life and their life is fossilized in poverty, superstition and ignorance. They have remained backward economically and socially.

Though Criminal Tribes Act was repealed in 1952 the stigma of criminality is still attached with them. Due to this stigma, they are the victims of persecution and torture at the hands of the British then and the state machinery now. Anywhere an act of theft or robbery takes place persons belonging to these tribes in the surrounding area are arrested and subjected to various forms of torture. In the eyes of the society, they are still criminals, and a wide gulf exists between them and the rest of the society.

While all the above characteristics apply across sections of nomadic, semi-nomadic and the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) the characteristic of 'criminality' particularly applies only to the DNT. Since this paper deals with the concerns of criminality, that is why only the DNT have been discussed in detail here.

DNTs are not directly included in the category of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs), but some communities that were once classified as DNTs may overlap with PVTGs depending on their specific circumstances and geographical location. In other words certain tribes previously labeled as DNTs might also be classified as PVTGs due to their extreme vulnerability and isolation. The DNT tribes remain socially and economically marginalized even now, depriving many of them of basic human rights. . Examples of some Denotified Tribes- Berad, Banjara, Bhatma, Kaikadi, Kanjarbhat, Katabu, Lamani, Phase-Pardhi, Raj-Pardhi, Rajput-Bhatma, Ramoshi, Vadar, Waghari, Chhapparbandh, Bestar.

**Table 1: State wise classification of some of the DNTs**

State	Banjara	Vadar	Kanjarbhat	Berad
Andhra	S.T.	S.C.	S.C	S.C
Karnataka	S.C	S.C	S.T.	S.T.
Delhi	S.C.	S.C.	S.T.	S.C.
UP	O.B.C	O.B.C.	S.T.	S.T.
Orissa	S.T.	S.C.	S.T.	S.C.
Bengal	S.T.	S.T.	S.T.	S.C.
Bihar	S.T.	S.T.	S.T.	S.T.
Gujarat	S.T.	S.T.	S.T.	S.T.
HP	S.C.	S.C.	S.T.	S.T.
Rajasthan	S.C.	S.C.	S.T.	S.C.
Maharashtra	DNT	DNT	DNT	DNT
Tamil Nadu	DNT	DNT	DNT	DNT

As seen from the above table some tribes that have been categorized as SC in one state may come under the category of ST/OBC or DNT in other states. Difficulty in implementation of programs and policies formulated for the betterment of DNT arises because of these discrepancies.

## THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES: TEXT AND CONTEXT

The major sociological theories that contribute to the explanation of crime amongst the DNT are Anomie Theory, Sub-Cultural Theory, Differential Association Theory, Labeling Theory, and Discourse Theory

### **Anomie Theory:**

Emile Durkheim introduced the concept of anomie in his book *The Division of Labor in Society*, published in 1893, and said that anomie resulted from social deregulation causing the breakdowns in the social order. Robert King Merton in his essay entitled, "Social Structure and Anomie" centers around this idea of "structured strain" which means that the general forces and pressures in the social system push individuals into deviation.

Patrick (1968) applied Melton's theory to criminal tribes of India particularly to Mang Garudi. The Mang Garudi is a Scheduled Caste (Dalit) community in India, primarily found in Maharashtra, with a history of being classified as a criminal tribe under the British Raj. Patrick observed that criminality of the Mang Garudi was a function of the Indian social structure in that "They (Criminal tribes) experienced certain conventional aspirations of Indian society (desire for status, respect and subsistence) but were lacking in socially structured means by which they could realize those aspirations and this led them towards criminal behavior."

Besides social factors, economic factors, too, play an important part in pushing tribes towards the criminality. With the advance of civilization only intellectual and technically resourceful people could find important gainful roles in society. These social changes rendered many useful persons worthless. Due to these social upheavals, many persons and groups become economically sterile. Their skills were no longer worth-while. Biswas (1960) linked tribal criminality with economic factors when he studied criminal colonies in the Delhi State. He found that their expenditure exceeded their income; as a result, they were forced to commit crime in order to compensate their deficit budgets. These economically sterile groups are driven out of the society in a phased manner, from vegetation in jungles to prostitution and crime. The best example can be seen through the Piramalai Kallar community. Piramalai Kallars is a sub caste of the Kallars and belong to Denotified class in Tamil Nadu. While continuing to oppose the British, Piramalai Kallars were reduced to poverty. They became classified as a criminal tribe under the Criminal Tribes Act (CTA).

### **Sub-cultural Theory:**

One of the most important theorists of the sub-cultural theory is Albert Cohen (1955). Group-based adaptations to the failure to attain success goals involve the sub-culture. He concluded that criminal behavior amongst the children was as a result of the pressures of all dominant values. Walter Miller (1958) on the other hand argued that delinquent sub-culture arose entirely from the lower class who expected their boys to be tough and street-smart which gave them an incentive to join a gang which has its own sub-culture. These same sex peer group or offers a sense of belonging, and a way to achieve status that they cannot easily achieve in mainstream society.

Sub-cultural Theory proposes that the cultural structure is dominated by the majority norms, which forces individuals especially the marginalized groups to form new and different sub-groups through which they are able to find ways of creating a sense of community despite the prevailing alienation and anonymity. It brings a sense of autonomy by denying the social controls imposed by the state.

Sykes and Matza (1957) asserts since the criminal tribes consider their criminal behavior to be their "Kula Vruti" (Caste or tribal occupation), guilt-inducing thoughts do not appear. They have formed their own distinct community. They further justify their act by rationalizing that it is in conformity with the norms of his subcultural group. Another study of an Andhra village (Simhadri, 1972) reveals that the criminal tribes never felt guilty of their criminal behavior. Further, a given tribe by transforming itself into a caste group feels that thieving or committing a crime is the legitimate occupation of its caste.

### **Differential Association Theory:**

The first explicit statement of the theory of differential association appeared in the 1939 edition of *Principles of Criminology* by Edwin Sutherland and in the fourth edition of it, he presented his final theory. He termed his theory, 'differential association'. He anticipated an emphasis of the symbolic-interactionist perspective with his early use of the concept of differential association. He argued that people violate laws only when they define such behavior as acceptable and that there is an explicit connection between people and their ideas (that is,

definitions). So, for example, in his book 'White Collar Crime' he wrote that delinquent behavior is "learned in association with those who define such behavior favorably and in isolation from those who define it unfavorably, and that a person in an appropriate situation engages in such criminal behavior if, and only if, the weight of the favorable definitions exceeds the weight of the unfavorable definitions (Bhushan, 1989)."

Later Edwin Sutherland and Donald R. Cressey in an essay on "The Theory of Differential Association" wrote that the chief source for learning criminal behavior occurs within small, intimate groups (Sutherland & Donald, 1966). Sutherland has given nine propositions of differential association theory (Sutherland, 1974). The concept of Differential association is seen in the youngsters of the criminal tribes through learning process which includes techniques of committing the crime, directions of motives, drives, rationalizations and attitudes. In sum crime involves a learning process that one person passes on to others; people who develop criminal careers differentially associate with others who condone deviant/illegal activities.

Rendering the above theory to crime it can be concluded that what is moral or valuable in normal society is considered to be of no consequence by tribals. Tribals learn their own values which are immediately around them. As such the tribal family is the training ground for its children to learn criminal behavior. One of the functions of the family as explained by Haikerwal (1934) was to begin to teach the tricks of the trade (crime) the day a baby was born.

### ***Labeling Theories:***

Beginning in the 1950s with the work of people like Becker (1963) and Lemert (1951), the symbolic interactionist approach to crime began to focus on the way in which negative labels get applied and on the consequences of the labeling process. Having been labeled a criminal or harassed by the police as a gang member, the individual takes on that label as a key aspect of identity.

Howard Becker noted that the process of segregation creates "outsiders" (Becker, 1963, pp.9-10), who are outcast from society, and then

begin to associate with other individuals who have also been cast out. When more and more people begin to think of these individuals as criminals, they respond to them as such; continuing to engage in the behavior society now expects from them. The labeling process helps create a self-fulfilling prophecy. The self-fulfilling prophecy leads to damaged self-image and an increase in anti-social behavior (Ross, 1992).

As a culturally and socially marginalized group, members of the DNT tribes find themselves vulnerable to the labels historically imposed by the state apparatus – labels that have borne 'negative' connotations such as 'criminal tribes' and 'Denotified tribes.' These specific designations not only demarcate and segregate these communities but also contribute to their discrimination. Assigning a category name that is intrinsically linked to criminal activities casts an unwarranted negative perception on them within society. Even the term 'Denotified,' while indicating a transition from being labeled as criminal, retains echoes of their past branding (Susan, 1999).

Despite their historical separation from the caste system, these marginalized tribes found them labeled anew due to their impoverished economic status and society's unfavorable perception. They were assigned the symbol status of 'criminal tribes,' positioned as stratified lower castes burdened with the stigma of criminality. Consequently, they often face even harsher treatment than untouchables (Kolekar, 2023). In this context, the notion of outsiders and stigma seems to fit suitably to the case of criminalization of the nomads in India.

Thus it can be seen that laws and rules are simply instruments of control used by the ruling elites to maintain control of key institutions, and thereby shut out others who might challenge the authorities of the elites, something that this perspective postulates.

### ***Discourse Theory:***

Michel Foucault's book *Discipline and Punish* (1975) lays out Foucault's thoughts on how the elite in society dominate and control the rest of society. Foucault believed no societal advancements have occurred since the Renaissance; only technology has grown, further enslaving the human spirit. He believed the ruling

class used criminality as a way of preventing confrontations that could lead to revolution. According to Foucault, the dynamic groups of the lower social class commit crime. By committing crimes, they were calling for a change in the social system and rebelling against the social elite. The ruling class used the law as a means to diminish the power of these uprisings. The legal systems segregated the most dynamic of the lowest social class from the rest of society, forced them together as a group of outcasts, thus rendering them politically harmless. A similar scenario is seen amongst the DNT as their moral fabric and sense of social values is weak being illiterate and exposed from early life to criminality, they are unable to resist the lure of easy money which can be made by theft.

Instances of the improper exercise of authoritative power in practical scenarios are abundant, and a few are delineated below:

- a) A distressing incident involved police stripping a woman of her sari, ultimately leading to her demise. (Vishwanathan, 2002)
- b) Custodial deaths occurred due to police fabricating evidence to depict situations as accidental. (Dilip D'Souza, 2016)
- c) A regrettable instance involved the wrongful conviction and death penalty for six Denotified tribe's members; though rectified in 2009, it took 16 years to address the error. (Imaad Hasan, 2020)

Amidst these troubling circumstances, it is evident that stereotypes against Denotified Nomadic Tribes (DNTs) permeate various facets of society, including the police, media, and even some judicial circles. Most instances of atrocities go unreported, and only individuals of exceptional courage seek recourse through the judiciary. The potential for biases within the judicial system poses further challenges for these communities striving for justice

## INITIATIVES BY THE GOVERNMENT TO PROMOTE SOCIAL JUSTICE

Presently a few of the Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-nomadic 'Tribes' have been specified as Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribes and almost all the remaining communities have been specified by respective State Governments/ Union Territory Administrations as Other Backward Classes. There may be a few Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic 'Tribes' who are not placed in any of these categories. Some of them would also be in the central list of Other Backward Classes. The National Commission would identify them, study their socio-economic and educational needs and recommend to the government specific interventions for their overall development. Examples of some best practices are as follows:

- Dr. Ambedkar Pre-Matric and Post-Matric Scholarship for meritorious students belonging to DNTs so that they are empowered socially and economically.
- Nanaji Deshmukh Scheme of Construction of Hostels for DNT Boys and Girls for bringing about a focused intervention on the DNT communities that are not included in the SC, ST or the OBC list.
- Ashram Paddhati Vidyalaya- Uttar Pradesh has been pioneer in implementing Ashram Paddhati Vidyalaya scheme. This Scheme has been implemented with the intention of educational upliftment of the students belonging to Scheduled Caste, Vimukta Jati, Other Backward Classes and General Category students. Free education, housing, food, clothing, stationery and sports facilities are provided to students of class I to 12 (40 students in each class).
- Industrial Training Centers for De-notified Tribes- Established on 1st April 1986 in Pratapgarh district of Uttar Pradesh. Under the scheme, each center takes 20 students each and training is provided to them. A scholarship of Rs. 150/per month is also granted to all the students. The center trains the students of de-notified communities in Jute work through handloom, Stitching and sewing , Hindi language learning

## CONCLUSION

Looking back at the discussions held earlier about the theories, some of the theories have been put to context. The anomic theory contextualizes that when individuals cannot find their place in society without clear rules to help guide them. Changing conditions as well as adjustment of life leads to dissatisfaction, conflict, and deviance and crime. The sub-cultural theory lays emphases on the group-based adaptations to the failure to attain success goals involve the sub-culture. The Differential Association Theory on the other hand argues that people violate laws only when they define such behavior as acceptable and that there is an explicit connection between people and their idea. The Labeling Theory postulates that having been labeled a criminal or harassed by the police as a gang member, the individual takes on that label as a key aspect of identity. The Discourse Theory at the end focuses its attention on the context that by committing crimes, they were calling for a change in the social system and rebelling against the social elite.

Drawing the reference from the atrocities meted out by the police on the DNT, police training academies will have to make special efforts to sensitize the new trainees to treat this unfortunate lot with less brutality and greater understanding. Moreover, the people of India will have to raise their voice and alert the authorities at local and national level to the kind of silent genocide that the DNTs are facing. It is then that, some day, these first freedom fighters of our country will receive the benefits of independence for which they have carried the stigma of being branded for over a century. There is also the need to identify their complex problems which vary from state to state due to their habitation, ecology, tradition and cultural ethos, and to find their remedies especially to their rehabilitation in vocations suited to their genius and to wean them away from their criminal tendencies, particularly the children.

The Nomadic and Denotified Tribes are National tribes. They have no place of their own. Hitherto, their life is a long tale of suffering and persecution due to the absence of a means of livelihood and the stigma of criminality attached to them by the sedentary society. While it may take years and years to remove this stigma, the injustice meted out to them due to the act of omission and neglect could well be corrected without any further delay. It will be impossible for these tribes to enjoy

human rights or the civil rights available to the citizens of India unless there is a positive intervention of the government in the form of Constitutional safeguards. It is time that the Census authorities take up the work of deciding on a procedure to count the DNTs as a distinct category in the next Census.

This study plays a crucial role in promoting social equity and inclusion by shedding light on the persistent marginalization of Denotified Tribes in India. It provides evidence-based insights that can support the development of targeted policies and programs aimed at improving their living conditions. By highlighting both historical injustices and contemporary struggles, the study contributes to greater public awareness and advocacy for the rights of DNTs. Academically also it addresses a significant gap in research concerning these communities and encourages further scholarly engagement. From a human rights perspective, the study emphasizes the need for systemic reforms to ensure justice and equal opportunities for DNTs.

To build upon the current findings, future research can explore several key areas. Comparative studies across different Indian states could offer a broader understanding of regional variations among DNTs. Analyzing the actual outcomes of policies and welfare programs targeting these communities would also be valuable. Focused research on the roles and challenges of women and young people within DNTs can bring attention to often-overlooked perspectives. Additionally, documenting the cultural heritage, oral histories, and artistic traditions of these communities is crucial for preserving their identity. Longitudinal studies that track progress and changing conditions over time would provide deeper insights into the effectiveness of ongoing interventions.

Though this paper has attempted to cover most of the textual and contextual perspectives, there is still scope for further enriching. The limitation of the paper is that much of the available information is drawn from secondary sources, which may affect accuracy and depth. While every effort was made to approach the study with cultural respect and sensitivity, the diversity among DNTs means that some cultural nuances or localized practices may not have been fully captured. Finally, limitations in time and resources restricted the possibility of extensive fieldwork or long-term study.



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