

Research Note

Self-reliance of Tribal through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR): A Case Study in Tripura

Oliver Uchoi¹ and Ram Singh^{2*}

ABSTRACT

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is the most important global issue with serious challenges and implications on almost all the sectors of the society. Emerging economies of the world including India are coping with the issues relating to poverty, hunger, malnutrition, women rights, child labour, farmers suicide and community welfare *etc.* Therefore, corporate sector has its vital role to address these societal issues through CSR. The paper is an effort to document the socio-economic improvements of tribal farmers in the state of Tripura through CSR. A sample of 120 beneficiaries of CSR of Tripura Forest Development & Plantation Corporation Limited (TFDPC) in five adopted villages under TFDPC was taken. It was found that CSR of TFDPC in study area impacted a lot for upliftment of livelihood and income of tribal of the state. Hence, the intervention of CSR including all organizations must be tapped for development the remote areas of the country, especially the remotely located tribes of hilly areas.

Keywords: CSR, Rubber and Tribe, TFDPC, Tripura

INTRODUCTION

The Corporate Social Responsibility is to bring positive impact towards the society and environment. The corporate, environment and people are inter-connected to each other because the company gets its resource from the environment as well as labour from the society and output is consumed by the society itself. Therefore, it is the primary responsibility of the corporate sectors to come forward and share some amount from their profit on sustainable development without harming assets and resources of the society. Frequent crop failure and animal diseases due to limited accessibility of advisory particularly farmers of remotely located villages in difficult terrains of hills (Singh, 2019) is also making the urgency of CSR. Livestock play an important role the socio-economic development of rural and tribal households (Gupta *et al.*, 2019). The corporate sector has to play its role through CSR culture to address these social ills.

In April, 2014 India was the first country in the world to make corporate social responsibility (CSR) mandatory, by the law of The Company Act, 2013. Under CSR Companies Act 2013, CSR are dated in section 135 and schedule VII of the Companies Act, 2013 and effective on 1st April, 2014, notified by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs. With the inclusion of clause 135 of the Companies Act 2013, CSR had been made compulsory for some companies during any financial year. Companies with a net worth of Rs.500 crores or more or, turnover of Rs1000 crores or more or, net profit of Rs. 5 crores or more shall constitute a CSR committee and shall spend in every financial year, at least 2 per cent of their average 3 years net profits in fulfilment of its CSR policy (GoI, 2019). Now In every company in India have separate department and teams for CSR which develop specific policies, strategies, and goals for their CSR programs and set separate budgets to support them. It has been seen that in India a majority of CSR funding is spend on developed

¹MBA Scholar, ²Professor (Agricultural Economics), SSS, CPGS-AS, CAU (Imphal), Umiam-793103, Meghalaya

*Corresponding author email id: ramsingh.cau@gmail.com

states and official estimates have found out that Maharashtra and Gujarat together received 23.4 per cent of India's total CSR spent.

In Tripura state of North Eastern Hill Region (NEHR) during 1968 to 1987 there has been fast growing practice of *jhum* cultivation years after years. In 1968, 25 thousand *jhumia* families in the state were dependent on *jhum* cultivation for their livelihood (Anonymous, 2007) whereas in 1978, 46.85 thousand families, during 1987, the number increased to 55 thousand families and during 1999, it was estimated about 51 thousand families depended on *jhum* (GoT, 2019). The tribals get most of their livelihood necessities from the forests as there was no source of earnings for living. The huge practice of *jhum* cultivation was found in Dhalai and South district (Das and Das, 2014). The incessant increase of practicing *jhum* years after years forced the Government of Tripura to take innovative approaches towards the development of tribal livelihood systems. Tripura Forest development and Plantation Corporation (TFDPC) was established during 1976 mainly to bring positive impact on both the problems. It mainly manage commercial rubber plantation for three different purpose *i.e.* rubber sheet and timber for value addition, economic rehabilitation of tribal shifting cultivators and development of forest in degraded land. Later bamboo plantations were also adopted mainly for the rehabilitation of steep slopes in the rubber plantation working circle through bamboo. After TFDPC was established there was a direct fall of practice of *jhum* cultivation by securing livelihood.

The availability of cultivable land in Tripura is limited with minimum size of the operational holdings. The paucity of plain land available for cultivation of cereal crops is also an imperative reason for attaching more stress on exploring possibility of horticultural development on hill land and introduction of plantation crops of economic value (Singh and Feroze, 2019). Therefore, each family given up to one hectare of rubber plantation in their area for latex extraction and after collecting the latex they could sell back to the corporation in fair price. TFDPC has also created employment in large numbers in different departments and is also engaged in many social welfare activities mainly for shifting cultivators to

put off the practice of *jhum* cultivation thereby contributing in employment generation and socio-economic development for the most part in rural areas of the state. The present paper is an effort to understand the apparent benefits for making communities self reliant for their livelihood through CSR activities by the corporation.

METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted in 5 tribal dominated villages (Ichacherra, Sachiram Bari, Abhangcherra, Gunachandra para, and Tara Chandra para) of Julaibari block of South district of Tripura state (Figure 1). As these villages were adopted by TFDPC where many developmental activities for self-reliance were executed through its CSR funds. Major tribes reside in these villages are "Tripura" tribe. A list of TFDPC-CSR beneficiaries was prepared and a sample of 120 beneficiaries was drawn randomly. Primary household data on livelihood security such as annual income, assets, land inventory, savings and income from other sources were collected through personal interview method.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Different activities through CSR of TFDPC were analyzed and found that CSR has played vital role in skill development, cleaning programme, recruitment, financial support and environmental care (Figure 1) for upliftment of tribal society in state of Tripura. It has been realized by beneficiaries that TFDPC should come forward for education, healthcare and sports facilities through its CSR. It was assumed that education, sports and healthcare is required for young generation.

To understand the income and livelihood generated by beneficiaries of CSR; it is categorized into occupation and income generated through different activities like income from rubber plantation and income from TFDPC organization. Among the beneficiaries' respondents, it was found owner cultivator, daily wage workers and daily wage worker as well as owner cultivator benefitted and reported out of total respondents of 15 per cent, 10 per cent and 75 per cent, respectively. Thus, it was apparent from the analysis that CSR of TFDPC has played role in

Figure 1: Perception of CSR beneficiaries of TFDPC in Tripura state

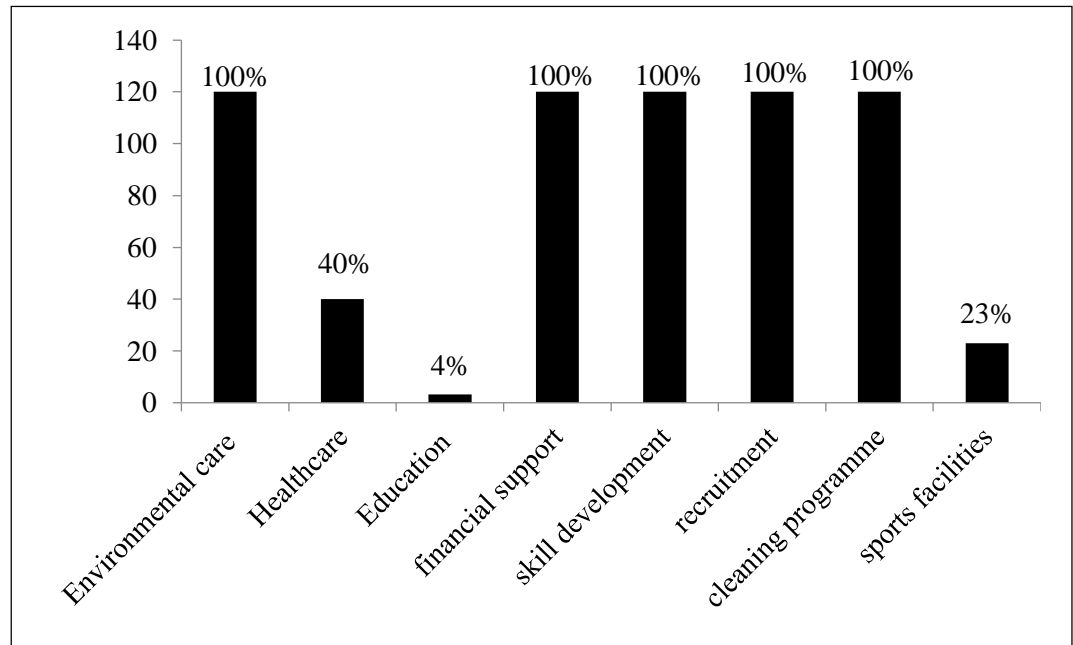


Table 1: Income and wage generated directly from TFDPC organization (n=120)

Categories	Beneficiary (No)	Percent	Wages/day (Rs)	Income/year (Rs)
Rubber Tapper	53	44.16	265	95,400
Tapping Cum Plantation Supervisor	2	1.6	270	97,200
Protection squad	12	10	256	92,160
Night Guard	5	4.16	256	92,160
Processing worker	29	24.16	265	95,400
Plantation supervisor	1	0.83	270	97,200
No income	18	15	-	-

occupation/job generation for the local tribal of Tripura state. The CSR implementation area of TFDPC was rubber grown area where 65.83 per cent of beneficiaries earned Rs.1,00,000 and above per annum. Around 24.16 per cent of them had an income level of Rs.80,000 to Rs. 1,00,000 through CSR of TFDPC. Hence, it was observed that the CSR has played role in increasing income of the tribal.

TFDPC organisation was found to provide employment to the tribals in the study area. 44.16 per cent were working as a rubber tapper with an annual income of Rs. 95,400 followed by processing worker (24.16%) with the same income of Rs. 95,400. Other employees in the organisation were Protection squad (10%), tapping-cum-plantation supervisor (1.6%) with an

annual income of Rs. 92,160, Rs. 97,200 and Rs. 92,160, respectively (Table 1). The wages rate given to different categories of workers under TFDPC organization were reported to be highest in comparison to any of other organization or schemes run by central government in the country.

CONCLUSION

As the farmers of Tripura state of NEHR are resource poor and to start any activity for income and livelihood generation they need liquid (finance), but, every time it is not possible for financial support which a need for every household located in remote village of country. Therefore, CSR of different types of firms can be a panacea for self reliance in respect of livelihood and

income generation as it has been proved by CSR of TFDPC organization in the state of Tripura and beneficiaries have perceived very pivot role in making them self reliant.

Paper received on : February 18, 2020

Accepted on : February 27, 2020

REFERENCES

Anonymous (2007). Tripura Human Development Report, 2007, Government of Tripura, pp 245.

Das, S. and Das, M. (2014). Shifting Cultivation in Tripura: A Critical Analysis, *Journal of Agriculture and Life Sciences*, **1**(1), 48-54.

GoI. (2019). South Tripura District Administration. <https://southtripura.nic.in>. Accessed on 23.5.2019.

GoT. (2019). Directorate and Information Technology (DIT) a, Tripura. (2019). CSR policy of TFDPC Ltd. <https://tfdpc.tripura.gov.in>.

Ravi, R.K., Saha, A., Tiwari, P.K., Dhakre, D.S. and Gupta, A. (2019). Entrepreneurial Behaviour of Tribal Dairy Farmers in Balrampur District of Northern Hill Region of Chhattisgarh, *Indian Journal of Extension Education*, **55**(4), 25-30.

Sarkar, S. (2011). Rubber plantation: A new hope for rural tribals in Tripura, *International Journal of Plantation Science*, **6**(2), 274-276.

Singh, R. and Feroze, S.M. (2019). Evolution of System of Rice Intensification (SRI) and economic security in Tripura state of North east Hill Region of India, *E-planet*, **17**(2): 89-97.

Singh, R., Singh, M.P., Singh, R.K. and Chauhan, J.K. (2019). A Study on Mobile Based Agro-advisory in Meghalaya, *Indian Journal of Extension Education*, **55**(1), 71-77.