

PREFACE

A substantial population of India relies on primary economic activities such as agriculture and allied economic activities in rural India. Therefore, it is crucial to prioritize the development of sustainable rural livelihoods that can adapt to and overcome stressors through the maintenance and enhancement of stakeholder capabilities. The present study explores the extent of sustainable livelihood in an underprivileged region, specifically *Jangal Mahal*, an extension of the Chhotanagpur plateau located in the southwestern part of West Bengal. The aim of the present study is to understand the challenges faced by these communities in the focused area and try to build strategies for transforming their livelihoods toward sustainability.

Specific challenges in the region include low productive soil, limited extension facilities, reliance on subsistence farming for sustenance, and a lack of opportunities for livelihood diversification among the local population. Consequently, these factors substantially contribute to extreme poverty in marginal communities.

Henceforth, the primary focus of this study is to identify and explore potential avenues for sustainable livelihoods. The research focused on shedding light on strategies, resources, and interventions that could contribute to a more sustainable and resilient livelihood pattern. In order to understand the sustainable livelihood scenario in this area, this study aimed to evaluate the role of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDGs 5 and 8, in promoting productive activities and creating decent jobs to mitigate the crisis within the context of a rural, disadvantaged community.

Eight chapters systematically articulate the entire thesis.

Chapter one presents the work by providing a theoretical background, conceptual framework, research questions, a brief review of the existing literature, and objectives. This chapter also depicts the profile of the study area. This chapter explains the research methodology, database, rationality, and structure.

Chapter two outlines the diverse socioeconomic conditions within the study area. It described the physical, socioeconomic, and cultural landscapes of the region. Furthermore, the physical landscape highlights the physiographic and climatic phenomena of the area. This chapter also discusses cropping patterns, irrigation potentiality, and the sources of various economic activities.

Chapter three aims to understand the causes of chronic poverty among marginalized communities. It discusses how incapable human resources and limited opportunities contribute to delayed economic growth and poverty. It also highlights potential remedies to improve the consequences of resource utilization efficiency.

Chapter four focuses on suitable practices that underprivileged people can implement on their possessed land to achieve self-reliant living. It analyzes the prevalent socioeconomic situation in detail. Furthermore, this chapter describes the persistent poverty of marginalized people, which leads to circular mobility. In this context, SDG 8 has gained prominence.

Chapter five explains how gender inequality harms the region's economic well-being and impedes social progress. It seeks to address and correct the existing disparities and injustices that women face over time.

Chapter six addresses inadequate financial capacity and limited household employment opportunities, contributing to rural education. Therefore, understanding the cultural and educational contexts is crucial to integrating indigenous groups into society.

Chapter seven investigates the existing strategies. Furthermore, this chapter aims to assess public policies. The chapter then summarizes the entire research, suggests some effective strategies to overcome the challenges, and concludes with recommendations.

Chapter eight concludes the thesis.