



Xavier Institute of
Social Service



JHARKHAND JOURNAL OF
DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT STUDIES

Volume 22, Issue 2; June 2024
<https://www.xiss.ac.in/JJDMS/archives>

TRIBAL LAND DECLINE IN ODISHA: A SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES

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The land held by tribal people in Odisha has been declining, causing enormous difficulties in their lives and livelihoods. According to a number of studies and reports, including the draft report of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India, there has been a 12 percent decline in the land held by the tribals between 2005–06 and 2015–16. A number of laws that recognise the customary socio-cultural rights of tribal communities have been enacted to prevent land alienation and involuntary displacement, especially in scheduled areas. The PESA Act of 1996, the FRA of 2006, and Orissa Regulation 2 of 1956 are some of the special legislative provisions that entitle tribal rights over resource ownership and use as well as terms of transfer. Despite legal provisions, tribal land ownership is declining, causing resource scarcity and the desecration of the abode of their spirits and ancestors. Due to growing demand for land from multiple sectors, a large share of tribal land has been encroached upon and converted into other uses. This paper analyses the reasons behind and implications of the decline of tribal land in Odisha using both primary and secondary data.

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Keywords: *Tribal land, shared resources, scheduled area, forest dwellers, customary rights, land alienation.*