

## Mental health consequences of Development-Induced Displacement faced by tribal people

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Context: The displacement of indigenous communities to make way for development projects is a routine occurrence in low-and-middle income countries, like India. The tribal populations are the ones that have to bear the brunt of these developmental activities most frequently due to their close proximity to the natural resource-rich areas. Although much has been written about their economic and social experience of displacement, the psychological effects remain largely unexplored and poorly understood. Consequently, even as the state has made efforts to provide economic relief to these displaced communities, psychological mitigation and rehabilitation efforts continue to be missing.

Evidence indicates that the experience of these populations in the aftermath of displacement can have severe long-term psychological effects. In this overview, the author has divided the effects into two categories: (a) reduced mental health and well-being, and (b) increased incidence of mental illnesses. With respect to the former, the conditions are tricky to capture because of the poor understanding of the tribal psychological context. For the latter, diagnosis and treatment using conventional methods is difficult because of how different these populations are from the mainstream. For instance, there is evidence of members experiencing a profound and prolonged grief and 'nostalgia' after having been separated from their land, and of people displaying atypical somatic symptoms of depression: neither of which are reflected in typical diagnostic criteria.

In this overview, the author discusses the incidence of both categories of mental health consequences experienced by tribal communities in India that have been displaced due to developmental projects.

Methodology: The study is based on extensive literature review of available research articles, governmental and non-governmental reports that are available in the public domain. The key words that have been used for this purpose include 'displacement and tribe', 'mental health and displacement', 'mental illness and displacement', 'psychological well-being and displacement', 'tribe and well-being'.

Results: Based on available reviews, the study proposes a two-part approach to address the mental health consequences experienced by tribal populations. The first includes identifying, studying and documenting the two categories of conditions as uniquely experienced by the population in question. The second part includes creating a policy input document that outlines in detail the requirements (including technical knowledge, infrastructure and human resources) for offering mental healthcare for displaced tribal people.

Conclusion. The most effective approach to reduce the psychological harm caused to tribal populations is to enhance the state's development-induced displacement policy by providing an effective empirical understanding of the mental health consequences.