A STUDY ON TRIBAL SUB PLAN AND TRIBAL WELFARE DEVELOPMENT IN KARNATAKA: AN EXPONENTIAL GROWTH MODEL ANALYSIS

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***Abstract*—Tribal communities constitute an important segment of the population of Karnataka and face various socio-economic challenges, including limited access to education, healthcare, employment, housing, infrastructure, and livelihood opportunities. So, the Karnataka Government implemented the Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) within the broader framework of the Scheduled Tribe Component (STC), which has been an important policy mechanism for ensuring targeted development interventions for Scheduled Tribes (STs). The Government of Karnataka has implemented several welfare and development programmes through the Department of Tribal Welfare and other departments to improve the socio-economic conditions of tribal communities. According to the results, the trend equation for fund allocation, Y = 3111.682 + 805.607X, indicates an average annual increase of approximately Rs.805.61 crore. Similarly, the expenditure trend equation, Y = 2608.081 + 816.828X, shows an annual increase of approximately Rs.816.83 crore.**

The exponential growth model reveals a statistically significant increasing trend in both TSP fund allocation and expenditure in Karnataka during 2015–16 to 2024–25. The estimated annual exponential growth rates were 15.78% for TSP fund allocation and 16.75% for TSP expenditure. The models recorded R^2 values of 0.618 and 0.652, respectively, indicating that 61.8% and 65.2% of the variation in allocation and expenditure were explained by the time trend. The corresponding F-values of 12.937 and 14.970, with significance levels of 0.007 and 0.005, confirm that both models are statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted, indicating a significant upward trend in TSP fund allocation and expenditure during the study period. The study clearly highlights the important role of TSP initiatives in promoting the socio-economic welfare and overall development of Scheduled Tribe communities in Karnataka through various interventions, including entrepreneurship support, marriage incentives, professional assistance, community infrastructure, and nutrition programmes.

***Index Terms*—Tribal Sub-Plan, Scheduled Tribes, Tribal Welfare, Allocation, Expenditure, Socio-Economic Development, Linear Trend Analysis, Exponential Growth Model and TSP Initiatives**

I. Introduction

The development of Scheduled Tribes has been an important component of India's inclusive development strategy. Tribal communities often live in geographically isolated and economically disadvantaged areas and face constraints relating to education, healthcare, employment, infrastructure, housing and livelihood security. Therefore, targeted government interventions are essential to reduce socio-economic disparities and ensure equitable development. The TSP was introduced as a planning mechanism to ensure that adequate resources were directed towards the development of Scheduled Tribes.

Over the years, the approach has evolved into the Scheduled Tribe Component, with emphasis on targeted interventions and measurable development outcomes. At the state level, Karnataka has implemented several programmes for tribal welfare through the Department of Tribal Welfare and other implementing departments. Tribal welfare programmes in Karnataka cover several areas, including educational assistance, hostels and residential schools, scholarships, housing, livelihood development, economic assistance, skill development, infrastructure, healthcare and other social welfare measures. The effectiveness of these programmes depends not only on the amount allocated but also on timely expenditure, beneficiary coverage, quality of implementation and the extent to which programmes improve living standards.

II. Objectives of the Study

1. To study the performance and objectives of the TSP for tribal welfare and development in Karnataka.
2. To analyse the trends in financial allocation and expenditure under the TSP for tribal welfare and development in the state.

III. Hypothesis

1. TSP fund allocation and expenditure in Karnataka have significantly increased over the study period.

IV. Material and Methods

The study is primarily based on secondary data. The required data were collected from various reliable and authentic sources, including reports and publications of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India; State Budget Documents of Karnataka; Economic Survey of India (2025); Karnataka Economic Survey (2025); Department of Tribal Welfare, Government of Karnataka; and other relevant government publications. In addition, information was obtained from reputed journals, research articles, books, newspapers, and other official sources. The study covers a period of ten years, from 2015 to 2024, to analyse the trends in financial allocation and expenditure under the TSP for tribal welfare and development in Karnataka.

Statistical Tools of Analysis: The statistical techniques were used to analyse and interpret the data relating to the financial allocation and expenditure under the TSP. These include percentage analysis, growth rate, Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR), trend analysis, and exponential growth modelling. The analysis was carried out using Microsoft Excel, SPSS 21, and EViews to examine the trends and growth patterns in TSP financial allocation and expenditure over the study period.

Exponential Growth Model: It is suitable for analysing the trend in TSP fund allocation and expenditure in Karnataka, particularly when the values show a consistent percentage-type growth over time. The general exponential trend equation is:

$$Y = ae^{bt}$$

Where:

Y = TSP fund allocation/ expenditure

a = constant/ intercept

e = base of the natural logarithm (2.71828)

b = exponential growth coefficient

t = time period (years)

$e^b - 1$ = estimated annual growth rate

For estimation using logarithmic transformation:

$$\ln Y = \ln a + bt$$

For TSP Fund Allocation

$$Y_1 = a_1 e^{b1t}$$

For TSP Expenditure

$$Y_2 = a_2 e^{b2t}$$

The annual exponential growth rate can be calculated as:

$$\textbf{Growth Rate} = (e^b - 1) \times 100$$

Performance of TSP on Tribal Welfare Development in Karnataka

Karnataka has established itself as a pioneer state in affirmative financial planning through the enactment of the Karnataka Scheduled Castes Sub-Plan and Tribal Sub-Plan Act in 2013. This statute integrates population-proportionate budgetary earmarking into the state's main fiscal planning framework. By establishing dedicated institutional mechanisms for the formulation, implementation, and oversight of sub-plans, the Act seeks to ensure targeted financial resource utilization to accelerate the socio-economic advancement of SCs and ST. The TSP is a special development strategy adopted by the Government of Karnataka to ensure that tribal communities receive an equitable share of government resources and development benefits. Instead of combining all development funds into a common pool, the TSP provides for the earmarking of funds specifically for the welfare and development of STs. The allocation is generally linked to the proportion of the Scheduled Tribe population in the state, in accordance with the applicable government provisions and guidelines. The TSP plays a significant role in improving the socio-economic conditions and quality of life of tribal communities through various development interventions, including:

Better Education: The TSP supports educational facilities such as residential schools and hostels, scholarships, educational materials, and other assistance to encourage tribal children to continue their education and pursue higher studies.

Basic Infrastructure: TSP funds are utilised for developing essential infrastructure, including roads, drinking-water facilities, housing, electricity, sanitation, and other basic amenities in tribal and remote areas.

Employment and Income Generation: The programme supports livelihood and income-generating activities by providing assistance for agriculture, livestock development, skill development, self-employment, and other economic activities to improve the earning capacity of tribal households.

Health and Forest Rights: TSP interventions also focus on improving healthcare facilities and access to essential services in tribal areas. In addition, various initiatives support the socio-economic empowerment of forest-dependent tribal communities, including access to basic amenities, clean energy, and the implementation of applicable forest and land rights.

V. Objectives of TSP

The primary objective of the TSP in Karnataka is to ensure the effective and targeted utilisation of public resources for the socio-economic development of STs, with financial allocations broadly linked to their population proportion. The major objectives include:

- To earmark an appropriate share of the State budget for the development of STs in accordance with their population and developmental needs, supported by the Karnataka Scheduled Castes Sub-Plan and TSP framework.
- To improve educational opportunities among tribal communities through quality schools, residential schools, hostels, scholarships and other educational support facilities, thereby promoting literacy and human capital development.
- To promote sustainable employment and income opportunities through skill development, vocational training, entrepreneurship, self-employment and financial assistance.
- To improve basic infrastructure and living conditions in tribal areas by providing housing, safe drinking water, roads, electricity/solar lighting and other essential amenities.
- To protect tribal communities from discrimination, exploitation and social exclusion while promoting their participation in the wider process of social and economic development.

VI. Results and Discussion

Growth in Trends of Fund Allocation and Expenditure of TSP in Karnataka

Through this study, it is clear that the fund allocation and expenditure of TSP in Karnataka. The TSP had a total allocation of Rs.12,025.82 crore, of which Rs.6,004.76 crore was released, and Rs.4,842.98 crore was spent. Thus, approximately 49.93% of the allocated funds were released, while 40.27% of the total allocation was utilised. Further, expenditure accounted for about 80.65% of the released funds. The gap between allocation and expenditure indicates that a significant portion of the TSP funds remained unutilised during the period. This highlights the need for timely release of funds and improved implementation and utilisation mechanisms to enhance the effectiveness of TSP programmes for the socio-economic development of Scheduled Tribe communities in Karnataka in 2025 (Economic Survey of Karnataka, 2025-26). The year-wise analysis of TSP fund allocation and expenditure helps to assess the financial commitment of the Government of Karnataka towards the welfare and development of Scheduled Tribes. The trends can be examined by comparing the amount allocated with the actual expenditure during the study period of 2015–2024. The analysis also indicates the extent to which allocated resources were effectively utilised for tribal welfare and development programmes.

Table – 1 Growth in Trends of Fund Allocation and Expenditure of TSP to Tribal Welfare Development in Karnataka (2015 to 2024)

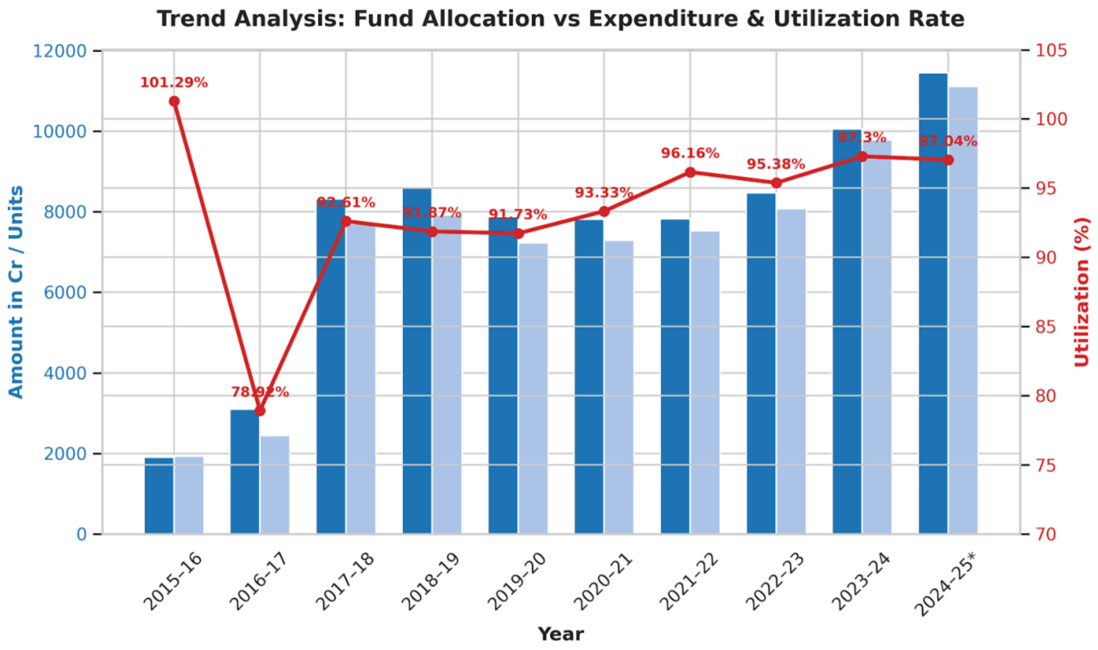
(Rs.in Crore)

Year	Fund Allocation (1)	Expenditure (2)	2/1 x 100 = (%)
2015–16	1,904.48	1,928.97	101.29
2016–17	3,099.95	2,446.46	78.92
2017–18	8,314.76	7,700.21	92.61
2018–19	8,614.04	7,913.50	91.87
2019–20	7,879.11	7,227.59	91.73
2020–21	7,816.22	7294.98	93.33
2021–22	7822.80	7522.20	96.16
2022–23	8,468.21	8,077.19	95.38
2023–24	10,058.13	9,786.63	97.30
2024–25	11,447.51	11,108.65	97.04

Source: Various Reports of Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India and Government of Karnataka Tribal Welfare and Finance (2015-2025)

Note: Data is gathered directly from the historical accounts maintained by the Government of Karnataka Tribal Welfare and Finance registries – 2015 to 2025.

The data presented in Table 1 reveal a significant increase in the allocation of funds under the TSP for tribal welfare development in Karnataka during the study period from 2015 to 2024. In 2015–16, the TSP allocation was RS.1,904.48 crore, while expenditure amounted to Rs.1,928.97 crore, resulting in an expenditure-to-allocation ratio of 101.29%. This indicates that expenditure slightly exceeded the reported allocation during the year. In 2016–17, allocation increased to Rs.3,099.95 crore, whereas expenditure was Rs.2,446.46 crore, representing a utilisation rate of 78.92%. This was the lowest expenditure-to-allocation ratio during the study period.



A sharp increase in TSP allocation occurred in 2017–18, when allocation increased to Rs.8,314.76 crore from Rs.3,099.95 crore in the previous year. Expenditure also increased substantially to Rs.7,700.21 crore, with an utilization rate of 92.61%. This indicates a major expansion in financial commitment towards tribal welfare and development. During 2018–19, allocation reached Rs.8,614.04 crore, the highest level up to that point, while expenditure increased to Rs.7,913.50 crore. The utilisation ratio stood at 91.87%. In 2019–20, allocation declined moderately to Rs.7,879.11 crore, with expenditure at Rs.7,227.59 crore, giving a utilization rate of 91.73%. During 2020–21 and 2021–22, the allocation remained relatively stable at Rs.7,816.22 crore and Rs.7,822.80 crore, respectively. Expenditure increased from Rs.7,294.98 crore to Rs.7,522.20 crore, while the utilisation ratio improved from 93.33% to 96.16%.

The subsequent years show a clear upward trend. Allocation increased from Rs.8,468.21 crore in 2022–23 to Rs.10,058.13 crore in 2023–24 and further to Rs.11,447.51 crore in 2024–25. Similarly, expenditure increased from Rs.8,077.19 crore to Rs.9,786.63 crore and Rs.11,108.65 crore, respectively. The expenditure-to-allocation ratio also remained high at 95.38%, 97.30% and 97.04%, respectively. The analysis shows that TSP fund allocation increased substantially from Rs.1,904.48 crore in 2015–16 to Rs.11,447.51 crore in 2024–25, representing a strong overall upward movement. The allocation increased sharply in 2017–18 to Rs.8,314.76 crore and subsequently reached its highest level in 2024–25.

Similarly, the TSP expenditure increased from Rs.1,928.97 crore in 2015–16 to Rs.11,108.65 crore in 2024–25. Although expenditure declined during 2019–20, it recovered gradually thereafter and reached its highest level in 2024–25. The linear trend analysis gives the following results:

Table-2 Linear Trend Analysis of TSP Fund Allocation and Expenditure in Karnataka (2015 to 2024)

S. No	Indicator	Fund Allocation	Expenditure
1	Trend equation	Y = 3111.682 + 805.607X	Y = 2608.081 + 816.828X
2	R^2	0.705	0.745
3	*F-value*	19.100	23.365
4	*p-value*	0.002	0.001
5	CAGR	22.05%	21.47%

Source: Compiled Data by Researcher

The trend equation for fund allocation is Y = 3111.682 + 805.607X. The positive slope coefficient of 805.607 indicates that TSP fund allocation increased by approximately ₹805.61 crore per year during the study period. The R^2 value of 0.705 indicates that about 70.5% of the variation in fund allocation is explained by the time trend. The F-value of 19.100 with a p-value of 0.002 indicates that the trend model is statistically significant. The CAGR of 22.05% further indicates a substantial annual compound growth in TSP fund allocation. Similarly, the trend equation for expenditure is Y = 2608.081 + 816.828X. The positive slope coefficient of 816.828, it shows that the TSP expenditure increased by approximately ₹816.83 crore per year. The R^2 value of 0.745 indicates that approximately 74.5% of the variation in expenditure is explained by the time trend. The *F-value* of 23.365 and p-value of 0.001 confirm that the expenditure trend is statistically significant. The CAGR of 21.47% indicates strong compound annual growth in TSP expenditure over the study period.

VII. Role of TSP Initiatives in Tribal Welfare Development in Karnataka

This study clearly indicates the role of TSP initiatives in tribal welfare development among ST communities in Karnataka. The TSP has played an important role in promoting the socio-economic development of ST communities in Karnataka. The principal objective of TSP is to reduce the development gap between STs and other communities by ensuring targeted financial resources and development interventions. They are briefly explained below:

1. Interest Subsidy Scheme for Scheduled Tribe Entrepreneurs: The Tribal Welfare Department provides interest subsidies to Scheduled Tribe entrepreneurs who obtain business loans ranging from Rs.10 lakh to Rs.10 crore from KSFC, nationalised banks, and District Central Cooperative (DCC) Banks. During

2024–25, Rs.1,200 lakh was spent to benefit 350 entrepreneurs. In 2025–26, Rs.800 lakh has been spent, while the selection of beneficiaries is currently in progress. The scheme aims to promote entrepreneurship, self-employment, and economic empowerment among Scheduled Tribe communities in Karnataka.

2. Incentives for Inter-Caste Marriage Couples: The scheme is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme aimed at promoting inter-caste marriages between ST persons and individuals from other castes, thereby encouraging social integration and helping to eliminate untouchability and caste-based discrimination. Under the scheme, Rs.3.00 lakh is provided to ST women who marry men from other castes, while Rs.2.50 lakh is provided to ST men who marry women from other castes. During 2025–26, Rs.2,456.96 lakh was spent to support 977 beneficiaries. The scheme contributes to social equality, harmony, and the socio-economic empowerment of ST communities.

3. Incentives for Widow Remarriage: The scheme provides an incentive of Rs.3.00 lakh to ST Widows aged between 18 and 42 years who remarry. It aims to promote social security, dignity, and social acceptance of widow remarriage among ST communities. During 2025–26, up to December 2025, Rs.33.00 lakh was spent to benefit 11 beneficiaries.

4. Incentives for Inter-Caste Marriage within ST Communities: The scheme provides an incentive of Rs.2.00 lakh to ST couples who marry across different ST communities among the 50 recognized ST communities. The annual family income limit is Rs.5.00 lakh, with an eligible age range of 21–45 years for men and 18–42 years for women. During 2025–26, up to December 2025, Rs.6.00 lakh was spent to benefit 3 couples. The scheme promotes social integration and harmony among different ST communities.

5. Encouragement for the Marriage of Children of Former Devadasis: The scheme provides financial assistance to support the marriage of children of identified former Devadasis. A financial incentive of Rs.3.00 lakh is provided for a male child and Rs.5.00 lakh for a female child. The annual family income limit is Rs.5.00 lakh, with an eligible age range of 21–45 years for men and 18–42 years for women. During 2025–26, up to December 2025, Rs.106.00 lakh was spent to benefit 30 beneficiaries. The scheme aims to promote social security, dignity, and socio-economic rehabilitation of families of former Devadasis.

6. Incentives for Simple Group Marriages: The scheme provides a financial incentive of Rs.50,000 to ST couples to encourage simple and group marriages and reduce the financial burden associated with marriage expenses. The annual family income limit is Rs.2.00 lakh, with an eligible age range of 21–45 years for men and 18–42 years for women. During 2025–26, up to December 2025, Rs.21.60 lakh was spent to benefit 43 beneficiaries. The scheme promotes affordable marriages, social equality, and economic support for Scheduled Tribe families.

7. Incentives for Scheduled Tribe Law Graduates: The scheme provides financial support to ST Law graduates with an annual income below Rs.2.50 lakh. Eligible graduates receive a stipend of Rs.10,000 per month for two years to undergo practical training under senior advocates. In addition, one-time assistance of Rs.50,000 is provided at the Taluka/TMC headquarters level and Rs.1.00 lakh at the district level to help them establish their legal offices. During 2025–26, up to December 2025, Rs.556.94 lakh was spent to support 466 ST Law graduates. The scheme aims to promote professional development, self-employment, and greater access to legal careers among ST youth.

8. Construction of Valmiki Bhavans: The scheme provides financial assistance for the construction of Valmiki Bhavans to promote community development and welfare among Scheduled Tribes. Construction costs are fixed at Rs.4.00 crore at the district level, Rs.2.00 crore at the taluk level, Rs.75.00 lakh at the hobli level, and Rs.20.00 lakh at the village level. During 2025–26, up to December 2025, Rs.680.00 lakh was spent on the construction of 74 Valmiki Bhavans. The scheme aims to provide community infrastructure and strengthen social and cultural development among ST communities.

9. Nutrition Programme for Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Communities: The Nutrition Programme provides supplementary food assistance to vulnerable Scheduled Tribe communities, particularly the Koraga and Jenu Kuruba communities living in Dakshina Kannada, Udupi, Kodagu, Mysuru, Uttara Kannada, Chamarajanagar, Chikkamagaluru, and Shivamogga districts. It also supports other tribal communities, including Kadu Kuruba, Soliga, Yarava, Malekudiya, Kudiya, Siddi, Goudalu, Hasala, Gond, and Bettakuruba, who live in or near forest areas. The programme aims to prevent malnutrition, particularly during the rainy season, by providing nutritious food items free of cost in addition to regular ration supplies. Each family receives the prescribed quantities of rice/millet/wheat, gram, cowpea/chickpeas, edible oil, sugar/ jaggery, eggs, and Nandini ghee at regular intervals. Food assistance is provided once every 45 days for six cycles a year, with eggs provided monthly. The programme seeks to improve nutritional security and protect the health and well-being of vulnerable tribal families. During 2025–26, up to December 2025, Rs.9,000.00 lakh was spent under the programme, benefiting 47,859 tribal families.

Table-2 Scheme-wise Fund Expenditure and Beneficiaries under TSP in Karnataka (2025–26)

Sl. No.	TSP Scheme	Fund Expenditure (Rs.in lakh)	No of Beneficiaries
1	Interest Subsidy Scheme for Scheduled Tribe Entrepreneurs	800.00	-
2	Incentives for Inter-Caste Marriage Couples	2,456.96	977
3	Incentives for Widow Remarriage	33.00	11

4	Incentives for Inter-Caste Marriage of Inner ST Communities	6.00	3
5	Encouragement for Marriage of Children of Former Devadasis	106.00	30
6	Incentives for Simple Group Marriages	21.60	43
7	Incentives for Scheduled Tribe Law Graduates	556.94	466
8	Construction of Valmiki Bhavans	680.00	74
9	Nutrition Programme for Vulnerable Tribal Communities	9,000.00	47,859 families
	Total	**13,660.50**	**49,463***

Source: Government of Karnataka (2025), Economic Survey of Karnataka – 2025-26.
Note: *beneficiaries/families + entrepreneur selections in progress

The table shows that the Nutrition Programme accounted for the largest expenditure at Rs.9,000 lakh, benefiting 47,859 tribal families. The Inter-Caste Marriage Incentive Scheme recorded the second-highest expenditure, at Rs.2,456.96 lakh, for 977 beneficiaries. Other important interventions included the construction of Valmiki Bhavans (Rs.680 lakh) and support for ST Law graduates (Rs.556.94 lakh). Finally, the above nine schemes together accounted for ₹13,660.50 lakh in expenditure during 2025–26, up to December 2025.

Hypothesis Testing

H_0: TSP fund allocation and expenditure in Karnataka have not significantly increased over the study period.

H_1: TSP fund allocation and expenditure in Karnataka have significantly increased over the study period.

Table-3 Result of Exponential Growth Model for TSP Fund Allocation and Expenditure in Karnataka (2015 to 2024)

Sl. No.	Indicator	Exponential Growth Equation	R^2	F-value	Sig.	Annual Growth Rate (%)
1	Fund Allocation	$Y = 3018.767\ e^{0.14652t}$	0.618	12.937	0.007	15.78
2	Expenditure	$Y = 2692.056\ e^{0.15489t}$	0.652	14.970	0.005	16.75

Note: t=1 for 2015–16, t=2 for 2016–17, and t=10 for 2024–25. The annual exponential growth rate is calculated as $(e^b - 1) \times 100$.

As shown in the above table, the exponential growth model indicates a significant increasing trend in both TSP fund allocation and expenditure in Karnataka from 2015–16 to 2024–25. For TSP fund allocation, the estimated equation is $Y = 3018.767e^{0.14652t}$, with an R^2 value of 0.618. This indicates that approximately 61.8% of the variation in TSP fund allocation is explained by the time trend. The F-value of 12.937 with a significance value of 0.007 indicates that the model is statistically significant. The estimated annual exponential growth rate is approximately 15.78%. For TSP expenditure, the estimated equation is $Y = 2692.056e^{0.15489t}$, with an R^2 value of 0.652. Thus, approximately 65.2% of the variation in expenditure is explained by the time trend. The *F-value* of 14.970 and significance value of 0.005 confirm that the expenditure trend is statistically significant. The estimated annual exponential growth rate is approximately 16.75%. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. Hence, it is concluded that TSP fund allocation and expenditure in Karnataka have increased significantly over the study period. The estimated annual exponential growth rates of 15.78% for allocation and 16.75% for expenditure further confirm the positive growth trend.

VIII. Major Findings

Based on the analysis of the TSP fund allocation and expenditure in Karnataka during 2015–16 to 2024–25, the major findings of the study are as follows:

1. The TSP fund allocation increased substantially from ₹1,904.48 crore in 2015–16 to ₹11,447.51 crore in 2024–25, indicating a considerable increase in the government's financial commitment towards tribal welfare and development.
2. In this study, it is clearly shown that the TSP expenditure increased from ₹1,928.97 crore in 2015–16 to ₹11,108.65 crore in 2024–25, broadly following the increasing trend in fund allocation.
3. The study found that the expenditure-to-allocation ratio was 78.92% in 2016–17, which subsequently improved and remained above 90% in most of the later years. It reached 97.30% in 2023–24 and 97.04% in 2024–25, indicating relatively effective utilisation of allocated resources.
4. Sharp increase after 2016–17: A substantial increase in TSP allocation was observed in 2017–18, when allocation increased to ₹8,314.76 crore from ₹3,099.95 crore in 2016–17.
5. The study results show that the exponential growth model indicates a statistically significant increasing trend in both TSP allocation and expenditure. The estimated annual exponential growth rates were 15.78% for allocation and 16.75% for expenditure.
6. The study result that the allocation model recorded an R^2 of 0.618 and an F-value of 12.937 ($p = 0.007$), while the expenditure model recorded an R^2 of 0.652 and an F-value of 14.970 ($p = 0.005$). Thus, both models are statistically significant.
7. The exponential growth model shows a significant increasing trend in both TSP fund allocation and expenditure in Karnataka during 2015–16 to 2024–25. TSP allocation recorded an annual growth

rate of 15.78%, while expenditure grew at 16.75% per annum. The models were statistically significant, with R^2 values of 0.618 and 0.652, respectively.

IX. Concluding Remarks

The study concludes that the Tribal Sub-Plan has emerged as an important instrument for promoting tribal welfare and socio-economic development in Karnataka. The analysis of the period 2015–16 to 2024–25 demonstrates a clear and statistically significant upward trend in both TSP fund allocation and expenditure. The substantial increase in financial resources reflects the growing emphasis placed by the Government of Karnataka on addressing the developmental needs of Scheduled Tribe communities. The improvement in the expenditure-to-allocation ratio, particularly during the later years of the study period, indicates better utilisation of TSP resources. The estimated exponential growth rates of 15.78% for allocation and 16.75% for expenditure further confirm the strong positive growth trajectory of TSP financial performance. However, increased financial allocation alone cannot ensure comprehensive tribal development. Greater emphasis should be placed on effective implementation, timely fund utilisation, transparency, monitoring and outcome-based evaluation.

Through this study, it is investigates the Tribal welfare programmes should increasingly focus on sustainable livelihoods, quality education, healthcare, housing, infrastructure, skill development, and economic empowerment under TSP. Therefore, strengthening the institutional capacity of tribal welfare agencies, improving inter-departmental coordination, and ensuring active participation of tribal communities can enhance the effectiveness of TSP initiatives. Finally, the TSP has made an important contribution to tribal welfare development in Karnataka, but sustained and outcome-oriented interventions are necessary to reduce socio-economic disparities and achieve inclusive and sustainable development among Scheduled Tribe communities.

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