

Ph. D. Dissertation

ABSTRACT

**SOCIO - ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES
OF DOYANG DAM PROJECT IN NAGALAND**

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The adoption of planned development after independence has resulted in an ever-accelerating growth in large infrastructural projects undertaken by both the Central and State Governments in India. These include mines, heavy industries and dams for power and irrigation projects. Undoubtedly, these are the means to our growth as an industrial nation. Since then the general living standards of an average Indian have gone up remarkably. However, till recently development planning was viewed as merely increasing production capacity and providing facilities for comfortable living. And to achieve these objectives the emphasis was laid on the exploitation of available natural resources for increasing output and profits. As a result, a great leap was made in the spheres of industrial and economic growth in the country, but we have, at the same time, systematically destroyed to a great extent the resource base i.e., the ecology, giving rise to the question of sustainability of the development path way in the

country. We have now entered into the era of growth and progress characterised by the syndrome of change that stems from the consideration of the interdependence between development and environment. There is now growing realization that development has to be environmentally sound and accepted by the people. This entails the need for looking at development from the point of view of the people, the way it affects their lives and livelihood conditions. In other words, environmental aspect and the people's participation have become a very important factor in the process of development planning.

Therefore, of late, these mega projects have become the subject of intense debate due to their large scale social, ecological and material destruction. The project in the field of flood control, navigation, energy and irrigation are necessary for the growth of national economy, but these have at the same time led to significant and irreparable losses. A dam across a river, for example, creates a huge man-made lake, consequently there is a considerable loss of agricultural land and it leads to erosion of top soil, forest, wild life and destroys huge immovable assets. At the same time, there

is considerable loss of silt and reduction of soil fertility due to impoundment.

Thus, in the light of Doyang Dam Project and its socio-economic and environmental consequences, this work has made a modest attempt to bring issues of socio-economic problem of the people and the environmental consequences into the process of development planning. The case of little known dam of Doyang Hydro Electric Project (DHEP) in Wokha district of Nagaland is not an isolated one from such human problems. The dam is expected to submerge around 5424 acres, making the total requirement of land for the project to approximately 8420.41 acres, involving the most fertile and strategic land of the affected villages with a population of approximately 30,000, mostly cultivators. This in itself is a great problem for the affectees. Destruction to such a large extent of land and forest naturally has a great socio-economic and ecological concern. Therefore, as a sociologist, we are concerned with how and what will be the social and economic life of the affected populace of the region when the project is completed? A number of social, economic and ecological questions are yet to be answered. This study has attempted to answer

some of such major socio-economic and ecological questions which is the subject matter of the present work.

Objective of the Present Study

A closer look at the problem under study helps us to identify the following specific objectives for the present enquiry.

- (a) First, the study intends to examine debates on dam building across the world to provide a global view and also on Indian situation to get general idea about how dams are being constructed in India vis-à-vis the social and environmental costs involved.
- (b) Secondly, the study analyses the socio-economic background of the people in the project area.
- (c) Thirdly, the enquiry focuses its attention on the history of the project and its developmental aspects.

(d) And finally, the study has analysed the socio-economic and environmental consequences of the project.

Secondary Sources

Sources of Data

Methods of collecting data and information include both Primary and Secondary. However much reliance was put on the primary sources.

Primary Sources

In order to get sufficient primary materials, interview methods of both structured and unstructured types were used. As a part of the structured interview we planned to interview 150 people through interview schedules covering both affected and unaffected people. But surprisingly, only 133 respondents came forward to give their opinions on various aspects of the dam. Of these, 84 were affected people and 49 were from this area but not directly affected by the construction of the dam.

Similarly, as a part of unstructured interview we conducted depth interviews of 30 selected people

comprising local leaders, opinion builders, government officials and employees of the project.

For this purpose mentions are made of few major dams from different parts of the world.

Secondary Sources

The secondary sources of information included government reports and records, documents, State Assembly debates, Speeches of important personalities and other published books, newspaper reports and journals.

Chapterisation

The dissertation is divided into the following chapters:

Chapter I: Introduction

The first chapter being in the form of introduction includes general remarks about dam construction, objectives of the study, methods of collecting data and review of related literature.

Chapter II: Debate on Dam

The study has attempted to analyse some of the major dams of the world in this chapter. While doing so,

the study has taken up an analysis of 'Global views' about the impact of dam and reservoir on the life of the people. For this purpose mentions are made of few major and much debated dams from different parts of the world such as, the Aswan Dam of Egypt, the Danube Dam of Europe etc. Similarly, the Sardar Sarovar Project on Narmada, one of the most controversial and widely debated dams in the recent times in India and few others have been discussed to project the Indian way of constructing dam.

Chapter III: Land and the People

This chapter has made a thorough analysis of the socio-economic background of the affected people in which a brief mention has been made of the traditional life of the Lotha community. However, special emphasis has been given on the existing socio-economic conditions of the affected people inhabiting the dam project area.

Chapter IV: Doyang Dam

The study has described in this chapter the river Doyang in Wokha district, its meaning and significance for the local people. It also provides a brief history of the project and its developmental aspects.

Chapter V: Socio-Economic and Environmental Consequences

This chapter of the dissertation discusses the findings of the study. It analyses the social, cultural, economic and the environmental consequences of the Dam. The study based on extensive research has brought out the project's actual impact on land, forest and natural wealth of the region. Some of the major findings highlighted are the possible emergence of landlessness, poverty, danger of displacement and of resettlement. Besides, the assessment of economic rehabilitation programme and project's environmental consequences constitute the main areas of discussion in this chapter.

Chapter VI: Summary and Conclusion

Here the study attempts to give a summary of the work and some suggestions thereof.

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