



## **Full Length Research Article**

### **SOCIO ECONOMIC CULTURE AND QUALITY LIFE OF TRIBAL PEOPLE IN ITDA PADERU AREA OF VISAKHAPATNAM DISTRICT**

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#### **ABSTRACT**

India has 461 tribal groups with a population of 677.68 (8.08%) lakhs, account for about one-fourth of the world tribal population (1991 census). The state Andhra Pradesh consists of 33 tribal groups with a population of 4.2 (6.31%) million. A large chunk of tribal population in the state is mainly concentrated in the nine scheduled districts like Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam, West Godavari, East Godavari, Warangal, Khammam, Adilabad and Kurnool. The district Visakhapatnam has a tribal population of 3,54,127, which forms 13.4%, out of the total population. The major tribal groups found in the district are Bagata, Kotiya, Kondadora, Nookadora, Konda Kammara, Konda Kapu, Gadaba, Mali, Porja, Mannedora, Khond and Valmiki. Among these tribes, Khond, Porja and Gadaba are considered to be the most primitive tribes. Majority of the tribal population in the district stand below the poverty line and facing the problems like indebtedness, illiteracy, malnutrition and exploitation. The interior tribal's still live relatively in isolation.

**Objective:** The main objective of this paper is aimed to discuss the socio economic culture and quality life of tribal people in ITDA paderu area of visakhapatnam district, their socio-economic and cultural background. The study was carried out in the ITDA area of Paderu, which falls under Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh. This paper is prepared mostly on the basis of the qualitative data with intensive fieldwork observations in the Visakha agency area, which falls under the sub-plan area of Paderu ITDA. During the Fifth five-year plan period for tribal development the government has evolved a new strategy of tribal sub-plan. The main objective of the sub-plan strategy is to integrate all the tribal development programmes including education in order to initiate these through a single administrative structure of ITDA. The integrated tribal development, sub-plan strategies are considered to be a landmark in the history of tribal development. The formal education institutions in the Visakha agency area are functioning under the control of the ITDA, Paderu.

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#### **INTRODUCTION**

Tribe means a set of people theoretically of common descent. It commonly denotes a community, a race, a breed or a class of people. The definition of the word "Tribe" is concerned and applicable to everyone. A tribal is a person belonging to that group. The word tribal is mistakenly understood as a Girijan or hills man. Actually the Girijan Community should be called Hill tribes. They are first listed out in the schedule to the constitution conferring on them certain rights and privileges.

Thus they are called 'Scheduled Tribes. People in practice understand the term tribal as a hill person and call him/her a Girijan in Indian languages for the sake of convenience. According to Dr. B.P. Chaurasia some indicators distinguish Scheduled Tribes from other sections of the people.

- They live in relatively isolated hills and forests.
- They are the oldest inhabitants of their native place.
- Economically and technologically they are still backward.
- Their language, culture, beliefs and customs are different.
- Their sense of history is poor.

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Again 'Tribe' is defined as a group of families living as a community under one or more chiefs, united by languages and customs. This understanding has in course of time become officially and socially accepted for all purposes. A specific common feature of a tribe is its isolation from the main stream of Hindu Culture. The Abbreviation is 'STs'. Thus in this work the Schedule tribe person is called a tribal Just for the purpose of convenience and common understanding and not in its literary sense. They are primitive in the sense that they are less developed and are backward with poor living conditions, when compared to others. Generally, the primitive tribal groups live in remote areas and high mountainous slopes, undisturbed by modern civilization. Most of the primitive tribal groups live in villages which are situated on hill tops or neatly tucked in the valleys of tribal areas. The tribal areas are near and in the midst of forests and mountains. They have very little contact with outside world. Forests and tribal people are inseparable and existence and development of one depends on the other. Tribal people have got a symbolic relationship with the forests and mountains around them. This work covers all the hill tribes who are involved in the marketing of minor forest produce in the weekly markets.

### Scheduled tribes

The Constitution of India, Article 366 (25) defines Scheduled Tribes as "such tribes or tribal communities or part of or groups within such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 to the scheduled Tribes (STs) for the purposes of this Constitution". In Article 342, the procedure to be followed for specification of a scheduled tribe is prescribed. However, it does not contain the criterion for the specification of any community as scheduled tribe. An often-used criterion is based on attributes such as:

- **Geographical isolation** – they live in cloistered, exclusive, remote and inhospitable areas such as hills and forests.
- **Backwardness** – their livelihood is based on primitive agriculture, a low-value closed economy with a low level of technology that leads to their poverty. They have low levels of literacy and health.
- **Distinctive culture, language and religion** – communities have developed their own distinctive culture, language and religion.

### Literacy rate in tribal areas

Tribal's in India are most backward community educationally. First generation learners have to face social, psychological and cultural barriers to get education. This has been one of the reasons for poor performance of tribal students in schools. Poor literacy rate since independence has resulted in absence of Tribal's in academia and higher education. The literacy rate for STs has gone up from 8.5% (male – 13.8%, female – 3.2%) in 1961 to 29.6% (male – 40.6%, female – 18.2%) in 1991 and to 40% (male – 59%, female – 37%) in 1999-2000. As per 2001 census, the literacy rate among Tribal's (47.10%) is found to be far below the overall literacy of the country (64.84%). The female literacy rate among Tribal's is far lower (34.76%) as compared to overall female literacy for the country (53.67%). However, the significant point is the

increase in total as well as female literacy among Tribal's, though still at lower pace as compared to the overall population for the country. The development of health facilities for scheduled tribe got impetus through successive plans. The primary health centres (PHC) health sub centers (HSC) and ICDS project established in tribal areas are indicators of extension of medical services to the Tribal's. The medical facilities though not adequate are hardly used by Tribal's living in isolated villages and hamlets. States with large proportion of STs like Mizoram, Nagaland and Meghalaya have high literacy rate while States with large number of Tribal's like Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh have low tribal literacy rate.

### Role of ITDA Paderu

Paderu is a village and a Mandal in Visakhapatnam district in the state of Andhra Pradesh in India. Paderu is the most important town in the Manyam area of Visakhapatnam district. Paderu is the center of Visakha agency. Integrated Tribal Development Authority (I.T.D.A) is located in Paderu. Wonderful locations and beautiful scenery abound in the areas surrounding Paderu. Coffee plantations in Minimuluru circle are very famous. The ITDAs were established by the government of Andhra Pradesh under the Tribal Welfare Department in the year 1975 as single line administrative agencies to cater to holistic development of the tribal people. The ITDA is working in an area categorized as Schedule 5 Area under the Constitution of India commonly known as the Agency Area. The ITDA was registered under the Societies Registration Act XXI of 1869 which include preparation of Projects and initiation of Socio-economic surveys, re-organization and strengthening of Administrative Structure; preparation of land records; setting up or strengthening credit-cum-marketing structure; debt redemption schemes, preliminary work on plantation schemes and execution of Minor Irrigation Schemes etc., The Integrated Tribal Development Agencies (ITDA) was established with the primary object of ensuring an integrated approach towards implementation of developmental programmes for Tribal's in the sub plan area. The Project Officers of ITDAs were vested with the administrative control over Agriculture, Horticulture, Livestock Farms, Ashram Schools etc. The District Tribal Welfare Officers of the Districts where there are sub plan areas are placed under the administrative control of Project Officers.

### Prologue

The Visakhapatnam District comprises of Three Revenue Divisions divided into 43 Mandals. The District consists of two natural divisions viz., the Agency and Plain areas. The Agency mainly consists of hilly regions covered by Eastern Ghats which run parallel into coast and stretches over a length of about 161 KMs., in the District from North-East to South-West lying in the interior parts of the District. It is situated between 170 10' and 180 25' of the Eastern Longitude. The Visakhapatnam District is having a territorial jurisdiction of 11,167 Sq. KMs. and has a population of 42,88,113 according to 2011 Census. The Agency area consists of (11) Mandals in Paderu Revenue Division and (06) Mandals consisting of 45 villages in T.S.P. area. The Agency area is located in the Eastern Ghats forming part of the Visakhapatnam District.

This region extends over an area of 6,293 sq.km. which is approximately 54% of the district. The Agency Area is home to many tribal people and 90% of the population in this area belong to the various tribal communities including particularly vulnerable tribal groups.

### Area and people

The Principal Hill tribes living in the Agency are Bhagatha, Kondadora, Khond, Kondakapu, Valmiki, Kammara, Gadaba, Kotias, Porja and Nookadora. They speak Telugu and of few speak tribal dialects like Gadaba and Kotiya, Oriya, which is deciniya. The Bhagata and Valmiki are more advanced in all walks of life than the other tribes. The average height of the hills in the district ranges from 3000 to 3500 feet. There are several peaks having 4000 feet in height. The highest peak in the District is "Sankaram" which is about 5300 feet in height. The main river in the Agency is Machkund which is one of the Tributaries of the river Godavari. The River Machkund which is named after Fish God "Matsya Raja" rises in the Madugula Hills and flows nearly North at first and then turns west-wards into the Orissa State. The river flows as the boundary between Andhra Pradesh and Orissa States for about 80 KMs. In the lower reach the river is called as Sileru. There are water falls in its course at Duduma (Orissa State) and at Sileru. The water falls are being harnessed for generating Electricity. The climate in the Hill Region is cool on account of elevation and of the green vegetation. The monsoon sets early and is along drawn in the Agency area apart from recording on average rainfall of 8412.30 MM., as against 80 MM for the District. The winter also is severe in the Agency area with the minimum temperature touching as low as 30 centigrade some times. Half of the District area is covered by forests and a considerable portion of reserve Forest. The area is rich in Forest Produces. The important products are Teak, Maddi, Guggilam, Kamba and Vegisa. Bomboo which is found abundance in the Forest area is mostly supplied to the paper mill at Rajahmundry.

Tamarind, Ginger, Turmeric, Pippalimodi, Gantubarangi, Ranwalbia, Serpentine, Myrobalam, Adda-Leaf and Honey are the other significant items of Forest Produce collected in the Agency tracts of the District. The tribal's are having their own culture and customs. The Scheduled Tribes who are scattering the hilly region usually assemble at the weekly shandies. It is at these places they exchange information of their welfare with conductive local conditions prevailing and at times they use these places to fix up alliances. The shandy points are also benefitting the tribal's for their natural interest. Agriculture is the main occupation of the Tribal's. They cultivate both wet and dry crops. Their income is supplemented by collection and sale of Minor Forest Produce. The M.F.P. as collected is being purchased by the Girijan Co-Operative Corporation Limited, which is having monopoly right by paying fair price to the Tribal's. Many villages are not easily accessible. The Tribal Welfare Department and Panchayat Raj Departments are laying roads for interior villages besides some feeder roads. The Development of Roads in these hilly tracts has greatly enabled the Tribal's to have a frequent contacts with the plains people and improving their socio-economic conditions. The Railway line passes through Ananthagiri and Araku Agency area which is used to carry iron ore from Madhya Pradesh to Visakhapatnam Port. A Passenger Train is also running from Visakhapatnam to Kirondol to cater the needs of the Tribal's of Ananthagiri and Araku and Dumbriguda Mandals of Agency area. The following are the (11) Mandals in the Scheduled area of Visakhapatnam District.

### Cluster

There are two (2) Clusters namely "SANKARAM" in V. Madugula Mandal having a group of 25 villages with S.T. Population of 8260 and the other is "SAMMIDA" of Deverapalli Mandal having 17 villages with S.T. Population of 3912.

Mandal Wise Population - 2011 census					
S. No.	Mandal	No.of Villages	Total Population	ST Population	% of ST Population
1	Munchingi Puttu	303	47418	44538	94
2	Peda Bayalu	268	51890	49937	96
3	Dumbriguda	87	49029	46479	95
4	Araku Valley	164	56674	51876	92
5	Ananthagiri	278	49019	44190	90
6	Hukumpeta	168	51697	49594	96
7	Paderu	200	58983	48694	83
8	G.Madugula	292	53884	49970	93
9	Chintapalle	245	71640	64703	90
10	Gudem Kotha Veedhi	171	63174	56757	90
11	Koyyuru	136	50639	41213	81
	Total	2312	604047	547951	91

Besides the above 11 Scheduled Mandals, there are 91 Non-Schedule villages in the following Mandals

Sno	Name of the Mandal	No.of Non-scheduled villages
1	Ananthagiri	36
2	Nathavaram	2
3	Golugonda	8
4	Devarapalli	12
5	Madugula	21
6	Ravikamatham	3
7	Rolugunta	8
8	Cheedikada	1
	Total	91

## Major Tribes in Paderu, Andhra Pradesh

The following are the tribes living in the agency area of Paderu. Of which, Khonds, Gadaba and Poorja are the PVTGs (Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group).

Sno	Sub - tribe	Population
1	Bhagatha	137083
2	Kondadora	141089
3	Valmiki	55085
4	Kondakapus	1952
5	Kotia, Benthoriya	30038
6	Yendia, Yerukalas, Nookadoras	7127
7	Kammara	23192
8	Khonds(PVTG)	86010
9	Gadaba (PVTG)	15921
10	Poorja (PVTG)	31088
11	Others	19366
	TOTAL	547951

## Dances

The folk dances and the folk-music of Tribal's in spite of the material advancement in the recent past have preserved and protected the ancient form of dance and music from its total annihilation and have given us ancient legacy in which the country can be proud of this rich heritage. Undeniably the tribal folk dances are a part of their lives and a very important part of their cultural heritage. Today tribal folk dances and festivals are a great attraction all over the country than ever before. An unusually emotional nature is the general characteristic of the folk dances. The major folk dances of Tribal's are Dimsa, Mayura, Bison-horn, Gusadi, Savara, Lambada and Chenchu.

## Dimsa Dance

Dimsa dance is one of the popular community folk dances in the agency areas of Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh. Young and old, rich and poor people of every tribal community are represented at the usual community folk dance gathering.



As one of the significant recreational activities of Tribal's, it is bringing countless hours of relaxation and gaiety to the tribal communities who face strenuously the challenge of rigorous habitats. This dance is generally performed on Chaitra festival or Eetela panduga, marriage occasions and on any festive occasion. The men and women gorgeously adorn themselves with traditional ornaments and new clothes. They form into a closely knitted long line by holding the hands of each other and dance in tune with music played by men. They move swiftly in serpents coil and cry 'hey' and 'hooi'. They perform about 7 to 12 types of Dimsa dances.

## Comb Manufacturing

Comb manufacturing is found among the Tribal's of Visakhapatnam district specially among Kammaras. The details of the families engaged in comb manufacturing are as follows (Sample villages). This traditional occupation is not pursued by one tribe alone. In addition to Kammaras, Bagatas, Valmikies and Kotias also are engaged in this occupation. They manufacture more than six varieties of combs. Unlike plastic combs, these combs are useful to remove lice and its eggs in the hair.

## Colourful Sarees of Gadabas

Similarly Gadaba women manufacture their own colourful sarees on their primitive looms out of fiber collected from wild plants. It is customary practice for a girl to weave her own saree for her marriage. In the past a girl is not eligible for marriage unless she knows the art of weaving of sarees and she has to weave her own sarees. But this art is becoming extinct and they are purchasing only mill made sarees.

## Suggestions for reform

Thus, it is clear that the Indian Constitution has made important provisions for the welfare of tribal people. Posts have been reserved for them in public services, in State and Centre.



Sl. No.	Village/Block	Tribe	No. of Families engaged
1	Sanyasammappalem- Paderu Block	Konda – ammaras	15
2	Guntagannela-ArakuBlock	Valmiki, Bhagata, Kotia	25

Seats have been reserved for then- representatives in the legislatures of different States and in the Indian Parliament. Special provisions have been made regarding their administration. District and regional councils have been established to carry out their welfare. The governments have given special attention to their education and economic development. This has not appreciably improved the condition of tribal people. The following suggestions can be made in connection with tribal welfare.

### **Economic reforms**

Efforts should be made to encourage tribal people to permanently establish for cultivation, because the shifting cultivation practised by them results in much wastage. The co-operative forests utilization societies can help the tribals in utilizing the forests in which they live. The government should arrange for technical help and education to improve the condition of tribal crafts and provision should be made for the marketing of the goods produced by them. Laws should be strictly imposed in tribal areas to solve the problem of indebtedness and to restrict exploitation. Co-operative credit societies can be organized to provide money for small scale industries. Labour laws should be strictly enforced in tribal areas.

### **Educational reforms.**

At the base of the fallen state of tribal society is their widespread illiteracy. Educational expansion, therefore, should be given primary consideration. The tribal education should be given through their own language and in their own cultural background. Colleges should be established to safeguard the tribal fine arts. Provision should be made for technical and commercial education in the tribes. Along with education, the tribal music, dance, plays and recreation should be encouraged. Religious dogmatism and superstitions should be removed through scientific education.

### **Reform in the level of health**

Efforts should be made to improve the level of health of tribal people. This will require provision of medicines, pure water, nutritive food, clean and properly ventilated houses and generally healthy atmosphere.

### **Social reforms**

Whatever may be the opposition from certain vested interests, efforts to carry out social reforms in tribals must be realized. The evil customs of bride price, magic and ritualism, child marriage, prostitution etc. should be removed. These social reforms can be carried out only after economic reforms.

### **Political reforms**

It is a pity that the Government officials posted in tribal areas misuse the ignorance of tribal people and exploit them for different purposes. They scorn the tribal culture and are completely indifferent to their welfare. The Government should appoint such officials as are conversant with tribal culture and intend to improve the condition of tribal people. In

free India the State and Central Governments have made incessant efforts in the direction of tribal welfare. At the central level a Commissioner attached to Home Ministry takes care of tribal welfare. Under him there are several regional Assistant Commissioners whose number has now increased to 16.

### **Stipends and various scholarships**

- Thousands of scholarships have been granted by Central and State Governments. Provisions have been made for special seats for tribal people in medical, engineering and technical colleges. Posts have been reserved for them in public services. Primary and secondary schools have been established in tribal areas where there is provision for free education.
- In the political field the tribes send their representatives to State and Central Legislatures, some of whom have risen to the rank of Deputy Ministers and Ministers. Some tribal youths qualify in All India Services and their number is gradually increasing.
- For the economic regeneration of the tribes, the Government has enforced rules regarding land ownership and utilization of land. Crores of rupees have been spent for the development of cottage industries.
- The Community Projects have been established everywhere. Grain shops have been opened which provide improved types of seeds. Laws in connection with debt have been enforced. Special multi-purpose tribal blocks have been created. Shifting cultivation is restricted and tribal families have been made to settle permanently on suitable land. Efforts have been made to provide housing facilities in some tribal areas.
- Hospitals have been opened which provide free medicines, check epidemics and cure all types of diseases. Research Institutes have been opened for the study of tribal culture and language. New roads have been made and old roads improved in the tribal areas. Personnel working for tribal welfare are given special training for this purpose.
- Institutes for their training have been established in Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Assam, Rajasthan Maharashtra and other States.
- The above brief outline of the State and Central Government efforts in the direction of tribal welfare show the extent of work that has been done in different Five Year Plans. This has definitely led to some improvement in some directions. The solution of tribal problems, however, requires a multi-sided planning.
- To quote D.N. Majumdar, an authority on Indian tribal problems: "There is no one solution to tribal problems, there is no common platform to demand it. There are levels of cultural development and there are different patterns of life that the tribes own. In any scheme of rehabilitation of tribal life, the attitudes and configurations of culture must be known to work out plans, as what is true of one culture area may not be so for a second."

### Some more suggestions for improvement of tribal education are as follows

- a) **Literacy campaign-** Proper awareness campaign should be organized to create the awareness about the importance of education. Extensive literacy campaign in the tribal dominated districts may be undertaken on a priority basis to literate the tribal.
- b) **Attitude of the tribal parents-**The attitude of the tribal parents toward education Should be improved through proper counselling and guidance.
- c) **Relevant study materials in local languages** -All study materials should be supplied in local languages of tribes.
- d) **Appointment of Local teachers and female teachers-** It is suggested to appoint more tribal teachers and female teachers in the tribal areas. The ecological, cultural, psychological characteristics of tribal children should be considered carefully by the teachers in tribal areas.
- e) **Residential schools** -More residential schools should be established in each states and districts and extended up to PG level in tribal areas.
- f) **Social security**-Social security of students, especially of adolescent girls is of great concern in residential schools.
- h) **Proper Monitoring**-Higher level officials should check the functioning of schools frequently relating to the teaching methods, working hours, and attendance registers.

### Conclusions

Education is the key to tribal development. Tribal children have very low levels of participation. Though the development of the tribes is taking place in India, but the pace of development has been rather slow. If govt. will not take some drastic steps for the development of tribal education, the status of education among tribes will be a story of distress, despair and death. Hence time has come to think it seriously about tribal education and inclusive growth. So, there is an urgent need for various govt. interventions, planners and policy makers to address this problem and allocate more funds in the central and state budgets for tribal education. Easy access and more opportunities should be provided to the tribal children in order to bring them to the mainstream of economic development.

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