

Socio-Economic and Health Conditions of Some Major Tribes in Andhra Pradesh

–K.S.Babu¹

ABSTRACT

Despite number of initiatives for improving living conditions of the tribals, the progress is not up to the mark. The forests are depleting at faster rate, though the government records do not reflect the reality at ground level. These forests are in no way sustaining food requirements of forest dwellers through their traditional means of hunting and gathering. Mostly they are dependent on agriculture either as cultivators or agriculture labourers. They are malnourished, poor, largely illiterate and rank miserably low in all sorts of health indicators despite of their wealth of traditional knowledge of keeping healthy. Their literacy levels are not adequate to compete with the general population and at the same time they decline to do any work in their native places. In this paper, an attempt is made to bring out general economic conditions, health issues and role of NGOs. Some of these issues are discussed based on two research works: one on Yandai tribe, a Dispersed Tribal Group (DTG) inhabiting in Prakasam, Nellore and Chittoor districts of Andhra Pradesh and a baseline survey (for CARE-STEP) of tribes inhabiting in jungles in North coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh.

Key Words: Yanadi, Health Conditions, Coastal Andhra, NGOs, Sub Plan funds

In this paper an attempt is made to bring out the developmental issues of some major tribes living in Andhra Pradesh based on two research works: one on Yandai tribe, a dispersed Tribal Group (DTG) inhabiting in Prakasam, Nellore and Chittoor districts of Andhra Pradesh and a baseline survey (for CARE-STEP) of tribes inhabiting in jungles in North coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh (East Godavari, Visakhapatnam, Vizianagaram and Srikakulam). The main focus of the paper is on economic conditions,

¹ Associate Professor at Centre for Economic and Social Studies, Hyderabad – 500 016; India; Email: ksbabu@CESS.ac.in

health conditions and NGOs working for tribes. The paper is organised into five sections: Introduction, Data Sources, Economic and Health aspects, NGOs and Conclusion.

INTRODUCTION

The proportion of tribal population has been increasing from census to census. In the Constitution, the backward ethnic groups categorised under Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) to facilitate them to reserve jobs, seats in educational institutions, etc. Scheduled Tribes basically live in forests. The Anthropological Survey of India under the

‘People of India Project’ identifies 461 tribal communities in India and enumerated 67,583,800 persons (84,326,240 persons according to 2001 census) constituting 8.08 per cent (8.2 per cent according to 2001 census) of the total population as per the 1991 census. The share of the scheduled tribe population to the total population in 1971 and 1981 was 6.94 and 7.85 per cent respectively. The question of tribes in India is closely linked with administrative and political considerations. Hence there has been increasing demand by groups and communities for their inclusion in the list of Scheduled Tribes (STs) of the Indian Constitution. That partly explains the steady increase in the proportion of the scheduled tribe population in India especially in the period between 1971 and 1981.

The tribal groups in India vary in features as geographical isolation, simple technology and conditions of living, general backwardness to the practice of animism, tribal language, physical features, etc. The criteria was neither clearly formulated nor systematically applied. One set of criteria was used in one context and quite different in another context. The result is that the list includes groups and communities strikingly different from each other, not only size of the population but also the level of technology and other characteristics. Indian anthropologists have been aware of a lack of fit between what the discipline defines as tribe and what they are obliged to describe as tribes (Xaxa, 1999). Further, there are instances of exclusions and unqualified inclusions. There are many communities whose self-image is that of being tribals and/or who are recognised as tribals by their neighbours but who have not been listed as STs. On the other hand there are communities who are not considered as tribals by their neighbours but who are in the list. For instance the Swanglas who are Brahmans in Himachal Pradesh are treated as a scheduled tribe in the statute. In 1991 census 67.8 million persons were enumerated as

ST; around 600 community names have been listed, but many of them are sub-tribes or synonyms (Burman, 2003). Mukherjee also reported similar problems in Madhya Pradesh. Census of India 1961 and 1991 listed 58 and 46 tribes respectively in Madhya Pradesh. But there are about 70 tribes in total because some 20 tribal groups due to various reasons have been left out (Mukherjee, 2003).

In India, sizeable tribal population live in Andhra Pradesh state.. There are 33 different tribal groups in the state with a population of 4.2 million. A large chunk of tribal population is mainly concentrated in the nine scheduled districts: Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam, West Godavari, East Godavari, Warangal, Khammam, Adilabad and Kurnool (Subramanyam, 2003).

DATA SOURCES

The data on Yanadi is obtained from the baseline survey conducted for Yanadi Tribal Development Plan and the data on north coastal districts of AP is taken from CARE STEP baseline survey. The Yanadi data is collected from secondary data and primary survey of 68,154 Yanadi households, group discussions with various tribal leaders and NGOs (The fieldwork was conducted during 1999, in Nellore, Chittoor and Prakasam districts). The household and village data was collected through the structured schedules. All the households of major Yanadi inhabited villages were contacted with schedules in the three districts. Among the tribal inhabited villages (based on census list), Yanadi inhabited villages were identified based on the enquiries with Yanadis in the Region.

In another study (CARE-STEP) 6000 households were surveyed in the tribal districts of north coastal Andhra Pradesh. The tribal areas in four north coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh, Viz., Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam and East Godavari, are categorised into following four strata: 1) Plain mandals which are easily accessible, 2) Plain mandals which were not easily accessible, 3) Hilly mandals which were easily accessible and, finally, 4) Hilly mandals which were not easily accessible. First stage sampling unit was the mandal. The mandals were selected from the above mentioned strata in the respective districts, based on tribal populations. In the second stage 200 villages are selected. From each of the mandals around 30 households are selected. Thus the total sample was around 6000 households (Table 1). The predominant tribes in the survey region were Konda Reddy, Koya Dora, Bhagata, Konda Dora, Porja, Jatapu and Savara (C.S.Murty N. Subba Reddy & Babu, 2004).

Yanadi Tribe: Unlike other tribal groups, Yanadis mostly live in plain areas along with general population. Some called Yanadis as the original inhabitants of the wilds in the neighbourhood Pulicat Lake, where they hunted and fished at will until they were enslaved.

Table 1: Mandals Selected for Survey in four Districts

<i>S.No</i>	<i>Type of Mandal</i>	<i>Srikakulam</i>	<i>Vizianagaram</i>	<i>Visakhapatnam</i>	<i>East Godavari</i>
1	Plain accessible	2	1		1
2	Plain inaccessible		1		1
3	Hilly accessible	1	1	2	1
4	Hilly inaccessible	1	1	2	1
	Total	4	4	4	4

by the Reddys. Yanadis were originally Chenchus, a small but superior class. Thurston (Thurston Edgar & Rangachari., 1909) noted that the people were natives of Sriharikota Island in Nellore district and suggested that they derived their name from the Sanskrit word Anadi denoting whose origin is unknown. Over a period of time, sizeable number of Yanadis had to change their occupations due to the fast depletion of forest cover. Now most of the Yanadis live out of forest. During 1960s, Fuch (Fuchs, 1977) has observed Yanadis as hunters and collectors of jungle produce led a nomadic life and were thus less attached to the soil, were able to evade the domination of the superior people. For many generations the tribes were allowed to live their ancient independent life as hunters and food collectors undisturbed, paying a nominal annual tribute to the rulers living in the plains wherever such a tribute was demanded. These tribes were rather small in numbers because they were only relic of larger communities that had been enslaved while they themselves had escaped, or because they became separated in the forests and hills of south India, and in course of time developed into different tribal societies. Moreover, their hunting and collecting mode of life forced them to live in small groups. The main homelands of this tribe were the Nellore, Chittoor and Chingleput districts. Most of them have lost all jungle characteristics and live as domestic servants and even as scavengers in the villages of the plains (Singh, 2004).

The jungle Yanadis were keen on fishing. They used to catch cobras and field rats. They used to collect honey and other jungle produce and had a good knowledge of medicinal herbs. Polygyny was widely practised,

but not polyandry. Their funeral rites and rites of worship resemble those of the Hindus. They worship the Hindu gods. Andhra Pradesh State Government categorised Yanadis under Dispersed Tribal Group (DTG) group. Yanadi population in the project area recorded steady growth from 1921 census to 1991 census. The Yanadi population in Nellore district was 79,000 in 1921 and the present Yanadi population of the district is 1,97,571. Similarly, the Yanadi population in Chittoor district was only 11,000 in 1921 and now it is 60,072 according to 1991 census. The growth of Yanadi population from 1921 census to 1991 census is shown in the Table 2.

Table 2: Yanadi Population from 1891 to 2001

<i>S.No</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Population</i>
1	1891	84,888
2	1901	1,04,000
3	1921	1,38,000
4	1951	1,55,727
5	1961	2,05,381
6	1971	2,39,403
7	1981	3,20,444
8	1991	3,68,500
9	2001	4,23,775

Source: Census of Andhra Pradesh

Yanadis are the numerically the third largest (4 lakhs) Scheduled Tribe of the State of Andhra Pradesh in south India. They are mostly distributed in the coastal districts of Nellore, Prakasam, Guntur, Krishna, also plain and forest areas of Chittoor and Cuddapah districts. They are also scattered in other parts of the state and north-eastern parts of Tamil Nadu state. The Yanadi population is steadily increasing as it is clear from the Ttable 2. For the first time Yanadi population figures were given in 1835 when the Sriharikota Islands, said to be the original headquarters of Yanadis come into the possession of the British Government. According to 1891 Census the population is 84,888 after 100 years their population increased almost four times to 3.5 lakhs, with an average of 2,836 peoples increase per year.

Certainly the limited forest cover in no way can sustain the lives of these tribes. They had to come out of the forests (or the forests are gradually already vanished in their living areas) for their livelihood and

even lost free access to forest due to government forest policies. Actually they are the original inhabitants of this forest who depend mostly on forest products like roots, tubers, fruits, leaves, honey and small game, etc., but now they fear a lot about the forest rangers and police. If they don't have any agricultural work or money, they simply go inside the forest and get some roots or tubers to fill their stomach. So they denied of their basic right to have free access to the forest at least for their survival but not for luxury what the contractors are getting from the forest products. Now they engage themselves as labourers, scavengers as whatever work available to them. Though Yanadis were forest dwelling tribes, now majority of them are living in plain villages in vicinity of caste populations. As a result they have undergone several changes in their customs, marriages, etc.

Tribes of North Coastal Andhra Pradesh: The predominant tribes in the Coastal Andhra region are Konda Reddy, Koya Dora, Bhagata, Konda Dora, Porja, Jatapu and Savara. The Primitive Tribal Group (PTG) which figured in the study are Konda Reddy, Khond, Gadaba, Porangi porja and Savara. The family size was 4.6 persons on an average. Some families found to have more members as seen in the Tables 3&4.

Table 3: Distribution of Households by Family size and Access

<i>S.No</i>	<i>Family Size</i>	<i>Plain accessible</i>	<i>Plain in-accessible</i>	<i>Hilly accessible</i>	<i>Hilly in-accessible</i>	<i>Total</i>
1	1-2	10.95	10.41	8.75	9.22.	9.42
2	3-4	42.61	42.64	39.03	38.68	39.80
3	5-7	42.72	43.97	47.02	46.43	45.85
4	8-10	3.40	2.64	4.97	5.28	4.62
5	10 and above	0.33	0.33	0.22	039	0.31
	Total	100.00 (913)	100.00 (605)	100.00 (2252)	100.00 (2311)	100.00 (6081)

Source: Murty, C.S., N. Subba Reddy, S. Subrahmanyam, V. Sarvanan and K.S. Babu (2004): Baseline Survey (Tribal areas of Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam and East Godavari District), Centre for Economic and Social Studies, Begumpet, Hyderabad.

Table 4: Distribution of Households by Family Size, by Tribe Group (percentage)

<i>S.No</i>	<i>Family Size</i>	<i>PTG</i>	<i>NPTG</i>	<i>Total</i>
1	1-2	9.33	9.48	9.42

2	3-4	38.81	40.41	39.80
3	5-7	46.60	45.38	45.85
4	8-10	4.88	4.46	4.62
5	10 and above	0.39	0.27	0.31
	Total	100.00 (2337)	100.00 (3744)	100.00 (6081)
Average family size		4.67	4.61	4.63

Source: Murty, C.S., N. Subba Reddy, S. Subrahmanyam, V. Sarvanan and K.S. Babu (2004): *Baseline Survey (Tribal areas of Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam and East Godavari District)*, Centre for Economic and Social Studies, Begumpet, Hyderabad.

ECONOMIC ASPECTS

Economic conditions of the tribal groups are discussed in the section. Since Independence, under Green Revolution, several irrigation projects were constructed and thousands of acres of land was brought under cultivation in the project area. Thus agriculture has become main occupation to the general population and there has been great demand for agricultural labour. About six months in a year, the poor and landless Yanadis who were once depending on forest, fishing, etc., has gradually taken to agricultural labour. Now agriculture labour has become main occupation of Yanadis in the project area. As per baseline survey, about eighty three per cent of the Yanadis were engaged in agriculture as labourers. Thus the hunting and food collecting Yanadi has become an agriculture labourer. The occupational structure of Yanadis in the project area is furnished in Table 5.

Table 5: The Present occupational pattern of Yanadis in the Project area according to the base line survey conducted is furnished below:

<i>S.No</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1	Agriculture labour	83.40
2	Collection and selling of fire wood	5.60
3	Fishing	4.90
4	Cultivation	2.00
5	Construction labour, transport labour, etc	0.20
6	Services.	0.60
7	Mining, Transport labour, etc.	3.30

The Yanadis living in the urban and semi-urban areas were mostly depending on rickshaw pulling, working as sweepers in municipalities and scavenging here and there. The survey revealed that around Rs. 5000 to Rs. 6000 was spent for food and household maintenance in the project area. The expenditure on social and religious ceremonies, on purchase of medicines ranged from around Rs. 100 to Rs.400. The expenditure on alcohols, repayment of old debts was relatively less. The expenditure pattern of Yanadis is furnished in the Table 6.

Table 6: Expenditure Pattern of Yanadis in the Project Area

S.No	Annual Expenditure (Rs.)	Districts			
		Nellore	Chittoor	Prakasam	Total
1	Food	4,991.11	4,964.06	6,059.87	5,191.70
2	Clothing	817.49	837.34	1,171.45	890.67
3	Social and Religious Ceremonies	466.94	592.00	832.39	560.54
4	Alcohols	72.34	354.94	765.71	194.33
5	Purchase of medicines	465.59	641.31	625.58	529.93
	Total	6,813.50	7,548.23	10,027.3	7,328.20

Source: Babu, K.S. (1999): *Yanadi Development Plan, Centre for Economic and Social Studies, Begumpet, Hyderabad*

Their expenditure on alcohol was quite High. Many Yanadis were depending on moneylenders for credit. They borrowed money for the purpose of domestic, health, and repayment of old debts, investment on income yielding pursuits. Out of total surveyed households of 68,154 only 8,533 were indebted which worked out to 12.5 per cent. The survey revealed that more than 80 per cent of the indebted Yanadi families borrowed from moneylenders only. The average debt position of the indebted Yanadi households in the project area was Rs. 2080 per annum. The purpose and source of borrowing as per the survey (1998-99) by the Yanadis in the project area are furnished in the Table 7.

Very few households availed credit from formal sources such as Girijana Co-operative Corporation Limited (GCC). Compared to other tribal populated districts such as north coastal Andhra Pradesh, the dependence and availability of Non Timber Forest Produce (NTFP) was minimal. That is why GCC played very limited role here. However, despite of number of other government programmes, majority of them depend on moneylender for their major credit needs. The prevailing credit

Table 7: Indebtedness Among Yanadis in the Project Area

S.No	Source of borrowing	Purpose of borrowing						Total C
		Household expenditure R	Repay-ment of debts R	Health R	Investment R	Functions/ Ceremo-nies R	Others R	
1	Nationalised banks	32.70	17.30	3.10	30.60	0.00	16.30	1.10
2	Gramina banks	53.40	2.30	3.80	20.60	1.50	18.30	1.50
3	Money lenders	58.90	16.20	21.50	0.80	2.60	0.10	88.00
4	Relatives/ friends	63.40	0.50	7.70	11.90	15.50	1.00	2.30
5	GCC	16.70	16.70	8.30	50.00	8.30	0.00	0.10
6	Others	60.50	0.70	14.70	20.30	1.00	2.90	6.90
	Total	64.20	14.50	20.20	3.10	2.70	0.70	100.00
	Total Number	5,006	1,240	1,725	268	231	63	8,533

Note: R: Row percentage, C: Column percentage

Source: Babu, K.S. (1999): Yanadi Development Plan, Centre for Economic and Social Studies, Begumpet, Hyderabad

Table 8: Distribution of Workers (14+) by Main Occupation and Access

S.No	Occupation	Plainaccessible	Plain inaccessible	Hilly accessible	Hilly inaccessible	Total
1.	Cultivation	32.71	36.75	50.93	55.72	48.66
2.	Agricultural labour	46.91	53.67	38.40	32.99	39.11
3.	Casual labour in non-agriculture	13.42	4.35	5.22	5.43	6.43
4.	Livestock rearing/fishing	0.82	1.56	0.79	0.83	0.89
5.	Minor forest produce	1.68	0.14	0.81	0.67	0.82
6.	Government employee	2.64	1.83	2.20	2.68	2.41
7.	Employee in private firm	0.77	1.02	0.69	0.74	0.75
8.	Business	0.41	0.48	0.51	0.48	0.48
9.	Others	0.64	0.20	0.45	0.46	0.46
	TOTAL	100.00 (2198)	100.00 (1472)	100.00 (5541)	100.00 (5668)	100.00 (14879)

Figures in brackets are absolutes.

Source: Murty, C.S., N. Subba Reddy, S. Subrahmanyam, V. Sarvanan and K.S. Babu (2004): Baseline Survey (Tribal areas of Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam and East Godavari District), Centre for Economic and Social Studies, Begumpet, Hyderabad.

Table 9: Incidence of Poverty (2002-03) by Access

<i>Item</i>	<i>Plain Accessible</i>	<i>Plain Inaccessible</i>	<i>Hilly Accessible</i>	<i>Hilly Inaccessible</i>	<i>Total</i>
A. Poverty Line = Rs.332. 74 /- per capita income per month					
Percentage of households below the poverty line	87.62	89.59	91.61	90.26	
B. Poverty Line = Rs.282. 98/- per capita income per month					
Percentage of households below the poverty line	81.05	84.79	87.52	86.71	85.97

Source: Murty, C.S., N. Subba Reddy, S. Subrahmanyam, V. Sarvanan and K.S. Babu (2004): Baseline Survey (Tribal areas of Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam and East Godavari District), Centre for Economic and Social Studies, Begumpet, Hyderabad.

rates from these sources were very high and these are in terms of Rs. 2, Rs. 3, Rs. 4, Rs. 5 for every Rs. 100 (interest rates ranged from 24 per cent to 60 per cent). Still they depend on these sources as they can get money immediately when they require as compared to its availability from formal sources, which requires elaborate procedures, and often time consuming. Sizeable proportion of their earnings was spent on their health.

Occupational pattern of the north coastal Andhra tribes is concerned, their traditional way of getting livelihood from forest was no more exists. Hardly one per cent of the tribes were depending exclusively on forests. Half of the households depended on agriculture and another 40 per cent of them depended on agriculture labour. About 6.5 per cent got their livelihood from non agriculture based labour. Proportion of non agriculture based labour was more among tribes of plain accessible areas (Table 8).

As shown in the Table 9, majority of the tribals in the study area live below poverty line in both cases of Rs. 332.24 per capita per month and Rs. 282 per capita income per month.

Health Aspects

The government structure as it exists today is unable to meet the health needs of the people in the tribal areas. When some one falls sick, the immediate government health personnel available at the village is the ANM. On records, there is one ANM for every 10 villages. Often she is not available in the village. Most sub-centres are poorly equipped and function from dilapidated buildings, resulting in poor performance and delivery of services As per the government rules for tribal areas, one PHC should cater to a population of 20000. However in practice, very few PHCs satisfy this². Though health facilities are provided in tribal areas, accessing these facilities is another main problem for majority of the tribals. Particularly north coastal Andhra tribes live in hilly terrain and forest areas. Physical distance seems to be less. But to travel that small distance, they have to climb up and down the hillocks. As a result, it is difficult to take the seriously ill person to the nearby health facility. Further health workers rarely visit such areas. Moreover the tribal areas have specific (endemic) health problems such as malaria, flourosis, gastroenteritis, malnutrition etc.

2 IIPP (World Bank assisted Tribal Health Project), Project Report, April 1996-March 1997, Tribal Welfare Department, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad.

Table 10: Details Relating to Delivery by Tribe Group (Percentages)

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Details</i>	<i>PTG</i>	<i>NPTG</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
Place where the child was born				
1.	Home	90.89	92.46	91.85
2.	Sub-centre	0.48	-	0.19
3.	PHC	1.44	1.06	1.20
4.	Private clinic	1.44	1.06	1.20
5.	District hospital	5.76	5.43	5.56
6.	Others	--	--	--
	TOTAL	100.00 (417)	100.00 (663)	100.00 (1080)
Assistance during delivery				
1.	Family members	55.88	53.70	54.54
2.	Government doctor	8.39	6.64	7.31
3.	Private doctor	4.32	2.41	3.15
4.	ANM.	6.00	6.49	6.30
5.	Dai	24.70	29.41	27.59
6.	Others	0.72	1.36	1.11
	TOTAL	100.00 (105)	100.00 (163)	100.00 (1080)

Source: Murty, C.S., N. Subba Reddy, S. Subrahmanyam, V. Sarvanan and K.S. Babu (2004): *Baseline Survey (Tribal areas of Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam and East Godavari District)*, Centre for Economic and Social Studies, Begumpet, Hyderabad.

Though these households approach private or government allopathic hospitals for major ailments, substantial number of them depends on locally available medical personnel such as herbalist and traditional practitioners. Veena Bhasin in her study among six tribal groups explains the curative process of sick person. The strategy a person chooses for treatment of his or her illness or that of a relative depends on personal experiences and preferences. The tribal response to health problems reveals a multiple and simultaneous usage of home remedies and multiple therapy depending on the cultural logic based on medicine of body fluids and supernatural dimensions (Bhasin, 2003). Therefore due to the poor health infrastructure in the study areas, still majority depends on local resources for their health needs. In Yanadi inhabited villages, particularly in Nellore and Chittoor districts, significant number of traditional medicine men provides health services. These locally available private practitioners are mostly qualified

in non-allopathic systems or persons running a practice without any qualification (Duggal & Vadair, 1995).

As shown in the Table 10, delivery is generally at home assisted by family members, locally available untrained or in some cases trained birth attendants. Though some studies confirm that midwife assisted home births are safe (Patel & Sharma, 2000), the tribal households prefer home deliveries in Andhra Pradesh. For instance, Konda Dora do not take their women to the hospital for delivery; it is possible that in the hospital the woman has to stay alone in the maternity room with the midwife visiting now and then, whereas in her village, she is surrounded by her elders and friends who comfort her and give her confidence to go through the ordeal.

91.85 per cent of child births took place at home invariably with the assistance of family members and dais. Almost all deliveries in respect of women of Khond and Bhagata tribes, Konda Dora, Jatapu, and Poija took place at home. This exposes the pregnant women to a great deal of risk. Although the deliveries attended to at home were relatively few in East Godavari it was no cause for complacency because the deliveries conducted there at home were also high. Health workers complained that it was highly difficult to motivate tribals to take the pregnant women to dispensaries. Part of the explanation for this lies in the difficult terrain in which they live. Often the difficult task of taking the pregnant women from a household located in an inhospitable terrain to a far off dispensary was compounded by the rains that sever the villages from the main land. The present system ostensibly cannot change in a few months or years. Habits die-hard and it may be more so in case of tribals. The financial incentive given to pregnant women to visit local hospitals was also found to be of no great help (C.S.Murty N. Subba Reddy & Babu, 2004). NFHS surveys also revealed the same as shown in the Table 11. Even in other health indicators IMR, TFR, Immunisation etc, their condition is poor compared to the general population. Even the recently conducted Mid Term Evaluation of 11th Five Year Plan, Less than 60 percent of the deliveries were institutional in Srikakula, Vizianagaram and Visakhapatnam districts of Coastal Andhra. The tribal population is relatively high in these districts (Manoj Panda et al ., 2011).

Health problems are a direct outcome of poverty, government policies that have adversely affected local livelihoods - high land alienation amongst tribals, threatened traditional agricultural practices, absence of forest rights and growing indebtedness (Yakshi, 2002). Over the past 10 years, livelihood systems in the tribal areas have witnessed rapid changes

under the impact of government policies and development programmes. Subsidy induced agriculture promoted actively by the government has had a negative impact on local agriculture, which is a major source of livelihood. Changing cropping pattern due to the introduction of commercial crops like tobacco and cotton replacing traditional food crops have adversely impacted on tribal's health eroded their food and nutritional security. Their dietary habits have changed from primarily millet and pulse base to rice base, resulting in deficiency of essential micronutrients, calories and proteins and declining immunity levels.

While there is a rich body of traditional healing practices, a growing dependence on allopathic medicine coupled with loss of medicinal plants have undermined the importance of traditional systems. As noted earlier, numerous local medicinal plants and herbs are effective as preventives as also proven cures. However these are being abandoned, thus increasing susceptibility to disease. Mitra explains that the ecological conditions drive them to be a part of belief system. Day-today unexplainable experiences have led the tribal people into believing in other than the material visible world. Generally the tribal people are found to establish a close relationship with the spiritual world either by controlling or overpowering the spirit by enchanting (Mitra, 2004). In the tribal society belief system and health (illness) are interrelated. For instance, Bhils are scared of evil spirits because they cause harm and illness. Tribals try to appease them in various ways (Jain & Agrawal, 2005). In Rajasthan, still people seek traditional priests to heal the illnesses caused by supernatural powers in tribal population of Rajasthan (Nagda, 2004). In some places treatment to diseases caused by sorcery (Mukherjee, 2004). In tribal community, illness and the consequent treatment is not always an individual and familiar affair, but the decision about the nature of treatment may be taken at the community level. In case of some specific diseases, not only the diseased person but also the total village community is affected. Health and treatment are very much connected with the environment. The traditional health care system and treatment are based on their deep observation and understanding of nature. The Tribal healer used, different part of plants not only for treatment, but also even for population control (Nagda, 2004).

Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)

The Planning Commission now recognises the value of voluntary action groups to accelerate the pace of people's action in the planned programmes

of development which is evident from the five year plan documents since seventh five year plan (Babu, 1999). It is generally viewed, as NGOs are more acceptable to the people than government functionaries. Now a days number of NGOs are working on tribal issues. They provide health care through mobile clinics and also conducting various health awareness camps. While some of them are working on advocacy issues as in case of getting appropriate and timely compensation in case of displaced tribals (displaces during implementation of some irrigation projects etc.). In the tribal areas common problems like land pattas are issued to some households with out showing land or the land is disputed under forest conservation act. Whereas in others case though land is in possession they do not get land patta. NGOs help tribals in marketing their agricultural products - turmeric, cashew, groundnut etc. They are also gathering information on various medicinal plants. They are training tribals in NTFP to maximize output. Some NGOs like MV Foundation are working on child labour issues, natural resource management, watershed development, check dam renovation, alternate livelihoods (basket making, delivery skills, skill development).

Good work NGO's is notable even few decades back. Prominent social workers and NGOs have done a lot to improve the living conditions of Yanadis. For example, Sri Vennelakanti Ragavaiah (popularly known as Ragavaiah Pantulu by Yanadis) did concrete work for Yanadis of Nellore district by establishing housing colonies and land colonisation schemes in the Nellore district by using the good offices of the then district Collectors. It was told during field work that Sri. V. Raghavaiah garu was a friend, guide and Philosopher to Yanadis in those days. Further, the Andhra Rastra Adimajati Seva Sangh also made concerted efforts for the rehabilitation of Yanadis in the areas of education and economic development.

In north coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh, an international NGO, CARE is implementing Sustainable Tribal Empowerment Project (STEP). For this project, CARE is working with several locally based NGO's (non-government organisations) to develop links between the indigenous tribal population and the local authorities. The process begins with the establishment of a community group who meet to discuss and identify the main problems faced by the village. This is all facilitated by CARE and the partner NGOs. At the time of the study, CARE partnered in Srikakulam district with local NGOs: BREADS, PPSS, Jan Chetana, REELS, Samakya. In Vizianagaram the partner NGOs of CARE are NEED, Jathu Trust, GPK, JKS, CODWEL Society, CDC. In East Godavari the partner

NGOs are CREATORS, pragathi, SUJANA, ARISE, SWEEP, SAKTI. In Visakhapatnam CARE partnered with NATURE, AASAV, KOVEL, TCDS, ORRC, VJNNS, CCN. Here CARE with the help of above said NGOs are helping local CBOs in various aspects with all support from local ITDAs.

Misuse of Government Funds

Government implement various schemes for the welfare of Scheduled Tribes under Tribal Sub Plan (TSP). The funds are allocated based on the tribal population's proportion to the total population in Andhra Pradesh (around 7 percent). Recently there is lot of criticism about misuse or diverting these funds for other works (not for the benefit of the tribal population). On 13th April, 2012, Government of Andhra Pradesh has issued Government Order (G.O.Rt.No. 1640) and thereby constituted a cabinet Sub-Committee to examine the matters relating to the implementation of the Scheduled Caste Sub Plan (SCSP) and Tribal Sub Plan (TSP).

CONCLUSION

Various sociological and anthropological studies have shown that in India in particular and developing countries in general, Western model of development, i.e. 'modernisation', as reduced to Westernisation, has not worked and would not work because the social-cultural specificities of Western Europe and North America have been quite different and exclusive from those in the Third World (Sharma, 2004). As it seen in two studies taken from two different geographical settings, there is significant variation in terms of occupation, population, family size, forest cover etc. recently launched National Rural Employment Programme may be extended to the tribal areas and prioritise the works under this scheme for growing medicinal plants and horticulture coupled with the traditional knowledge from tribes. Modern medicine may be supplemented with locally prevailing traditional health practices for better results. Keeping in view of the variations, while implementing the new tribal policy, utmost care should be taken. For instance proposing 2.5 acres of land for each family may raise number technical problems. Whether in terms its size across groups or its implications of retaining the existing forests. Similarly passing powers to grama sabhas also will have similar difficulties. In one way since tribals have the custom of abiding by tribal councils, this may

be an advantageous one. On the other hand, their illiteracy and ignorance may pave the way for unforeseen exploitations. One way to tackle these issues, there should an emphasis to involve NGOs as catalysts of the development process. In any case the implementation should be of gradual scaling rather than implementing uniformly.

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