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# Shifting Cultivation :

## A cause for environmental degradation

N. K. BEHURA

### Introduction

The practice of shifting cultivation is of ancient origin and is still widely practised in several parts of the world by tribal communities. In India 1,355,300 acres or 542,100 hectares of land are under this cultivation annually, according to 1976 report of the National Commission on Agriculture. But the actual area under direct use as real or potential shifting cultivation plots would be indeed five times more, that is, approximately seven million acres. In India too it is practised overwhelmingly by tribal communities whose number is estimated variously. One estimate puts it that 109 tribal communities, 528,940 households and 2,644,200 population depend on it for their partial subsistence (Kaith, 1958). However, up-to-date data about the exact extent of shifting cultivation in India is not available. Shifting or swidden cultivation has been defined as "Impermanent cultivation on hill slopes or on slightly level land, after cutting and burning the vegetation for rotation cropping for one/two or at best three years, and then abandoning the swidden plot for recuperation" (Mahapatra, 1953).

In the recent past Hill Bhuiyan, Juang, Kondh, Lanjia Saora, Didayee, Paraja, Koya and other tribal swiddeners of Orissa cultivated three plots simultaneously in the same year, that is, one first-year swidden, one second-year swidden and one third-year swidden. Crops grown in all the three are different, and each is named differently. This type of cultivation is of course distinguished from the one in which trees are felled and burnt and thereafter cultivated as a

phase of reclamation of land under forest cover for permanent cultivation. But both the types contribute to the steady depletion of vegetational cover.

It must be noted that under the same ecological condition neighbouring tribal groups may practise other types of cultivation, which depends upon the availability of plain land, low land and hill terraces. For example, the Apa Tani have their irrigated terraces surrounded by the shifting cultivation plots of the Dafla in Arunachal Pradesh, and in south Orissa the Lanjia Saora terrace the hill slopes and construct embankments around the plots for permanent cultivation, while their Kondh and other neighbours continue to practise shifting cultivation. But the swiddeners practising swidden or shifting cultivation normally do not terrace or bind the land to prevent erosion of soil. Consequently after a season of rains most of the top soil is washed away exposing thereby the rocks, and the swiddener is forced to move to another area with vegetational cover after harvesting one crop from that plot. The practice of shifting cultivation progressively makes the hills barren. During the months of February and March the swiddeners fell the tall trees and cut the shrub and bushes that cover the hill slope plot. They burn the withered timber and shrubs during the months of April-May as a quick expedient for two reasons—(i) they find it difficult to dispose of the dried up wood and bushes, and (ii) they use the ashes as readymade manure in the shifting cultivation plot. Ashes are strewn uniformly all over the plot. Seeds are dibbled

in to the soil ahead of the onset of monsoon so that these may not be washed away, and the ashes function as a light cover for the sown seeds. When the seeds sprout into tender saplings after initial rains these ashes provide some protection to these seedlings.

Shifting cultivation is practised in fifteen provinces of India, namely, Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Orissa, Tamil Nadu and Tripura. The percentage of Scheduled Tribe population practising shifting cultivation in any one province varies from the other. However, in eleven provinces a very significant percentage of Scheduled Tribe population depends on shifting cultivation, which is as follows: Mizoram-80.74; Nagaland-77.88; Manipur-73.5; Orissa-66.6; Tripura-60.00; Arunachal Pradesh-57.69; Andhra Pradesh 51.00; Assam-47.00; Kerala-39.00; Meghalaya-34.58 and Karnataka-32.00 (Mahapatra, 1988).

It is a common place fact that shifting cultivation is practised by forest-dwellers either in India or anywhere else in the world in interior hilly and forest areas where neither plain land nor enough suitable land is available for terracing too. Therefore, the local denizens are wont to practise shifting cultivation as a crude mode of subsistence. Notwithstanding the meagre yield from shifting cultivation plots, the most remarkable feature of this mode of cultivation is that almost all varieties of cereals, pulses, millets, oil-seeds and vegetables are grown in one plot which is wellnigh impossible in plain wet land cultivation.

This means that a shifting cultivator has the privilege of getting varieties of grains, pulses, oil-seeds, vegetables and fruits from the swidden plot through a single cultivation. In the first year as the fertility is very high the swiddeners usually grow one crop, either oil-seeds or millets. In the following year a large variety of crops starting from paddy, millet, maize, pulses, chillies vegetables, spices and seasonal fruits are grown in a planned manner. The seeds are sown in such a manner that harvesting does not create any problem for a swiddener although different crops become ready for reaping at different points of time. In the third year swidden plots are not cultivated these days as the lands are left with no fertility at all.

Shifting cultivation in some quarters is accepted as a necessary evil as the primitive hill

and forest dwellers have no other alternative than to practise it. As they have been practising it generation after generation since time immemorial it has become a way of life for them. It has undoubtedly evolved as a reflex to the physiographical character of their habitat. People who lack emic perspective condemn it as pernicious and detrimental to ecosystem. In common parlance it has acquired disparaging connotations nevertheless, it is a type of farming technology based on a specific adaptation to forest and hilly environments. In order to obviate ethnocentric misgiving about shifting cultivation it has been suggested that the term swidden cultivation be used instead of the term shifting cultivation. But mere change of the terminology does not provide any realistic solution to the problem. Shifting cultivation, which is variously designated, is a crude mode of impermanent cultivation. Clonkin suggests that any continuing agricultural-system in which impermanent vegetal clearances are cropped for shorter periods in years than they are fallowed constitutes shifting cultivation (1961). The chief characteristics of shifting cultivation are: (i) rotation of plots, (ii) slash and burn operation of vegetal species, (iii) leaving the used land as fallow for varying number of years for regeneration of vegetation, (iv) use of family labour as chief input, (v) non-use of modern agricultural technology and draught animals, and (vi) use of crude and simple implements such as hoes, dibble sticks, scrapers, knife, axe, sickle, etc.

There is no individual ownership of shifting cultivation land. All such land are either communally owned or are controlled and regulated by the traditional tribal village headman. Forest and hills had not been surveyed in the past, which are gradually now being surveyed in order to bring them under Government control. Therefore, tribals in the past used hills and forests for shifting cultivation purpose freely, thinking that they themselves were the real masters of such natural resources in their own habitat.

Now with the steady expansion of the Government administrative machinery to every nook and corner of India, tribal people have also realised that hills, forests and other natural resources over which they have been exercising control indeed belong to the State. The National Forest Policy proposed a ban on the practice of shifting cultivation as early as 1952 and the National Commission on Agriculture (1976) reaffirmed this proposal (Fernandes, 1988). The draft

Indian Forest Bill 1980 incorporates provisions to implement this suggestion. However the proposed Bill is still being debated at the national level and a comprehensive decision will be taken soon in this regard.

### Shifting cultivation and the Position of the State

Shifting cultivation continues to be a contentious point in the relationship between the forest dwellers and the Government. They are accused of being the chief destroyers of forests. The role of industry and major development projects is conveniently relegated to the oblivion. For instance, David Spurgeon attributes deforestation to shifting cultivation and to the population pressure among the forest dwellers. He says that :

This practice annually destroys ten million hectares of high forest and causes a steady decline in the fertility of the land... In the past the soil's fertility returned to abandoned areas over a period of 25—30 years, as a result of natural processes. But as population pressures increased, the cultivators returned to their abandoned sites much sooner, and the period of natural bush fallow was progressively shortened (1982:11).

Spurgeon only makes a mention of the population pressure among the forest dwellers, and he is silent on the issue of the progressive loss of forest land to them as a result of the expanding boundaries of the protected and Reserve Forests. This means that the amount of hill slopes and forest land at their disposal for shifting cultivation at present is much less than what they had in the past. Thus both these statements are true. However, Rothermund (1983:55) present a more rational viewpoint of shifting cultivation. He avers that it is part of the symbiotic relationship which the forest dwelling tribes have with forest. For him it is a rational pursuit in the context of traditional tribal economy under specific demographic and ecological conditions. It is the dominant productive activity for approximately twelve per cent of the tribal population of India (1985 : 132).

Mahapatra reports that in Orissa and elsewhere in the country Scheduled Castes and peasant castes who have immigrated to hill and forest habitats also resort to shifting cultivation from time to time (1983:19). In some cases

the money-lenders from outside have appropriated tribal lands and are using the same in the name of tribals for shifting cultivation. The practice of shifting cultivation by non-tribal vested interests for commercial purpose is a trite phenomenon. Thus apart from being a mode of subsistence, for the primitive forest dwelling tribals shifting cultivation does exist in the larger cash and commercial nexus. For instance, ginger, turmeric, chillies, fruits and vegetables grown by the shifting cultivators of Orissa and other provinces have extensive market in the plains. However, this sort of indirect linkage of the shifting cultivators with the market economy does not mean that they are integrated with it. Whatever they produce is primarily for their self consumption and partly for meeting their other requirements. Shifting cultivation persists, through an interplay of the ecosystem, social structure and economy of the primitive tribals and this is bolstered up by the economic interests of the encysting complex societies and by the lack of an appropriate State Policy.

Dependence on swidden or shifting cultivation may be considered as community based or individual based. Mahapatra has proposed a typology of swidden cultivation based on the extent of their dependence on it as a source of livelihood, such as—(i) Exclusive Dependence, when no other type of cultivation is practised; (ii) Major Dependence, when 50 to 75 per cent of the households depend almost wholly on it, while others may take up permanent agriculture or other occupations; (iii) Contingent Dependence, when all households of resettled, displaced or transplanted village communities may carry on swidden cultivation in their new settlement as a contingent means of subsistence, and (iv) Marginal Dependence, when people depend on swidden cultivation marginally, while drawing major part of their income from other sources (1983: 14-15). Roy Burman argues that there is hardly any tribe in India today for whom shifting cultivation is the exclusive dependence for survival (1961: 182). It is a complex of socio-cultural relationship between ecosystem, local resources, and historico-economic relationship with encysting communities. Roy Burman avers that while practice of shifting cultivation has a certain degree of autonomous existence of its own in the cognitive framework of the concerned communities, any attempt to interfere with them by taking recourse to its regulation on the basis of better environmental management is bound to meet with strong resistance (1988:87).

### An illustrative case of practice of Shifting Cultivation

The Pauri Bhuiyans of Bonai in the Sundargarh district of Orissa are irredeemable shifting cultivators in their forest and hilly environment. They continue to practise shifting cultivation in somewhat diminished form because of the growing restriction on the use of forest lands. Traditionally Pauri Bhuiyan villages had well-marked physical boundaries which included hills, forests, fallows, streams, waste lands, pastures, valleys and plain lands, etc. All the natural resources located within the village boundary used to be owned by the village. In other words the village community used to own all the village resources, and the village headman used to be their custodian.

Since independence several conspicuous inroads have been made through legislative and executive measures onto their traditional rights over forests and forest lands. In spite of this the Pauri Bhuiyans continue to practise shifting or slash and burn cultivation in a reduced manner.

It is a common practice among the Pauri Bhuiyans to convene a meeting of all the household heads for consultation regarding the selection of a patch of land for shifting cultivation or *podu chas*. In the meeting *pradhan* or the village headman and *Dehuri* or village priest play an important role in the selection of a fresh patch of hill slope for *podu chas*. At the time of selection of the intended plot, various ancillary factors are taken into consideration, such as, duration of the recuperative period, top soil quality, gradient of the land, etc. It is a general practice now-a-days to keep an uncultivated land fallow for at least 7 to 8 years. In the past the recuperative cycle was longer, reduction of the recuperative cycle is due to the shortage of fallow patches on the one hand and population growth on the other.

### Clearing of Vegetation

After the allotment of patches of hill slopes to individual households clearing of vegetational cover is commenced during the months of February and March. In this operation care is taken not to eliminate fruit-bearing, medicinal and useful plants. Trees which symbolise religious sentiment are also spared.

The trees, bushes and other vegetative materials are left at the original spots to be dried up by the scorching Sun. During the months of March

and April withered logs, bushes and shrubs are burnt away and the ashes are strewn all over the plot before the onset of the monsoon.

### Hoeing and Sowing

During the months of May and June, just after the first or second rain, both Bhuiyan men and women start digging their lands with hoes, and thus the lands are kept ready for sowing of seeds. The day for sowing seeds is determined by the village headman in consultation with the village priest.

The crops usually raised in the shifting cultivation fields by the Pauri Bhuiyan include rape-seed, gingelly (*sesamum indica*), mustard (*brassica campestris*), *mandia* (*eleusine coracana*), *kangu* (*Pennisetum italicum*), *burburi* (*vigna cutanga*), maize (*Zea mays*), *biri* (*phaseolus mungo*), *Jatangi* (*guizotia abyssinica*), *Larara* (*cajanus indicus*), hill rice, etc. In the first year only one type of oil-seed is grown, preferably rape-seed and in the second year mixed plantation is done in a planned manner. Seeds of various crops are not mixed up while sowing because different crops mature at different times. The main crops during the second year cultivation include millets, pulses and leguminous vegetables. In the third year only hill rice is grown, if the land is found to be worthwhile for the purpose. Some people sow seeds of *jali* (*echinocloa crus-galli*) in the third year if the top soil quality is poor.

### Weeding and Watching

Weeding of wild growth is undertaken during the months of June and July mainly by women and girls, but men also assist in the operation. The weeds are piled up on one side of the plot to decompose. And if necessary, the second weeding operation is undertaken in the month of October or November.

The standing crops need constant watching to ward off wild animals and birds who destroy the crops. The Bhuiyans build small watch-huts atop a raised platform near their shifting cultivation plots for the purpose. Watching of crops is purely a family affair and usually men and grown up boys undertake the job. During the day time women members of the family are also engaged in watching the crops. During night time constantly wooden logs are burnt in order to scare the predatory animals.

## Harvesting

Before harvesting small families move to their respective shifting cultivation sites where they camp till the harvesting is over. This sort of proximate living helps them to collect all the produce of their cultivation and toil to the fullest extent. Different crops are harvested at different times, and the operation continues from October to April. Reaping, collection of crops and threshing are all done manually, grains of cereals, millets and pulses are dried and cleaned at the threshing-floor. Likewise, oil-seeds, beans and other leguminous crops are cleaned and processed there and then brought home.

## Division of Labour

In the practice of shifting cultivation the entire family is involved. The head of the household has the overall responsibility in the entire operation of shifting cultivation. It is needless to mention that adult males undertake more strenuous works such as felling of trees and clearing of shrubs and bushes. Adult women invariably play the second fiddle to men. Grown-up children work as apprentices and assist their parents. Old men and women impart advices, repair tools, process and select good seeds for cultivation. They also work as baby-sitters.

## Tools and Implements

The tools and implements used in shifting cultivation are very simple and crude, such as hoes, crow-bars, tiny mattocks and picks. They secure these from local weekly markets or from the local blacksmith.

## Environmental Impact of shifting cultivation

Forest ecosystem is a complex whole consisting of vegetation and wildlife. Due to the practice of shifting cultivation persistently, the precious forests are destroyed, causing serious imbalance in the ecosystem. The ecological balance is upset and retrogression sets in bringing about xerophytic condition as a result of repeated burning. The plants coming in the next year in retrogression are more xerophytic than the plants that covered the site earlier. In areas heavily affected by shifting cultivation, the status of vegetation goes on changing until it disappears exposing the parent rock. Consequently adverse condition prevails against the species of the original climax forest, when the shifting cultivation plot is abandoned for recuperation. The condition necessary for the immigration and access of

these species is now absent. Once the adverse causes cease, development or regeneration is resumed by stages towards climax after migration, reaction and interaction of plants and animals that make up the various stages in the year. Thus the vegetation which takes possession of the abandoned field is something lower in the stage of growth and development. Shrubs appear but tree species disappear under the stress of burning and gradual erosion of soil.

Scientific data with regard to soil erosion due to shifting cultivation is lacking in India. Nevertheless according to official statistics out of 175.00 million hectares of land with environmental problem in the country only 3.00-million hectares are under shifting cultivation (VI Plan, 1981:21). As such, shifting cultivation accounts for less than 2 per cent of the area which have been earmarked as environmental problematic due to shifting cultivation. The National Committee on the Development of Backward Areas in India has reported that soil erosion per hectare of 60° to 70° slopes in the first year of shifting cultivation land is 146.6 tons; in the second year it is 170.2 tons and from the abandoned plots it is 30.2 tons per annum (1981 : 22). Population pressure alone cannot explain the present degradation of shifting cultivation land. This factor may partly be attributed to the sudden decrease in the area traditionally available for shifting cultivation to the tribal communities. Large tracts of protected forests have been brought under the reserve forest category. One can see this change in the State of Orissa. Fernandes says that between 1977-78 and 1980-81 the area under forest department decreased from 67,625.32 Sq. Kms. to 58,956.30 Sq. Kms., i. e. by 12.88 per cent because of the transfer of protected and degraded forests to the reserve category as well as simultaneously releasing some forest land to other government departments for agricultural, industrial and development purpose. This process has deprived tribal communities in Orissa of large tracts of shifting cultivation land (1988 : 11).

As a result of the shortening of the recuperative a cycles of swidden plots minor perennial hill streams in Orissa are drying up for varying periods of time during a calendar year, investigation reveals that in Orissa many hill streams on the Eastern-Ghat hill range, which used to be perennial throughout the year, some two to three

decades back, are now becoming dry for three to seven months during a year, particularly, in areas where shifting cultivation is being practised intensively.

### **Shifting Cultivation and Sustained Development**

It has been mentioned earlier that approximately 5,28,940 households with a population of 28,44,200 depend on shifting cultivation in varying degrees for subsistence in India. Shifting cultivation, by and large, is recognized as a pernicious mode of land utilisation. Authorities are of the opinion that in view of the environmental hazards the practice of shifting cultivation must be stopped. But before this is stopped a viable alternative mode of subsistence must be provided to the people, who depend on it for subsistence.

Roy Burman (1988:29) is of the opinion that tribal communities practising shifting cultivation be allowed to do so. But in order to make it sustainable in the framework of development he corroborates the views of the Shillong Complex of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research which states that stumps of fallen trees be utilized for making natural contour bunds on the hill slopes. And along side efforts must be made to stabilise these bunds by planting natural tall grasses or suitable live hedges or horticultural crops like pine apple, banana, citrus etc. Thus in course of time natural terraces on the hill slopes will be formed and soil erosion can be checked. Efforts must be made to properly channelise natural hill stream water for raising crops in these terraces. Management of natural water on the hills scientifically is an important factor in preventing soil erosion as well as for raising plants to save eco-systems from degradation.

The Lanjia Saora in Ganjam district of Orissa<sup>a</sup> have emerged as skilled hill slope cultivators, who are relatively well aware of the evil effects of soil erosion and have accordingly developed their lands to a very limited extent by constructing stone wall terraces on hill slopes, and bench terraces of land adjoining the perennial streams. Now they deserve to be helped with necessary funds and advanced technology so as to develop further their indigenous skill. There is no doubt that they have emerged as trend-setters among the shifting cultivators, they would gladly accept this method because they are now aware that extravagant use of land under shifting cultivation leads to quick erosion of soil and fertility and destruction of forest wealth and gradual drying up of perennial streams affecting water regime.

Apart from this macro-approach, intensive plantation programmes can be taken up for the swiddeners for providing them employment and alternative sources of income. Introduction of horticulture on an extensive scale while providing income to the swiddeners, will protect the environment. A comprehensive development programme be formulated for the swiddeners which should include agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry, poultry, forestry, arts and crafts suitable in their environment. The development package must include community and social services as well as craft-training and environmental education programmes. Immigration of people from plains to hilly and forest areas must be prevented, otherwise on the one hand all attempts for sustainable development of the primitive swiddeners will be neutralized, and ecological degradation will increase on the other.

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# Hand clasping and arm folding among the Reddy Caste of Ganjam district in Orissa

GITANJALI NAYAK  
AND  
K. ARUP KUMAR PATRO

When an individual clasps both his hands entwining his fingers, either the left or the right fingers remain on the top of the corresponding fingers. This pattern of hand clasping is clearly marked by the position of the thumbs of both hands. If the right thumb remains over the left thumb the individual is denoted as right hand clasper (R type). If the left thumb, the individual is a left hand clasper (L type).

Similarly, when an individual folds his arms across his chest, he places either his right arm over the left (R type) or the left arm over the right arm (L type).

These different types of hand clasping and arm folding are due to the dominance of one limb over the other. The exact reason of this limb dominance is still controversial and the mode of inheritance of dominance of limbs is not definitely known.

Luz in (1908) was first to point out the variation in the clasping of hands and later Weiner (1932) introduced the trait of arm folding. These two traits were later together used by many workers in the analysis of dominance of limbs. such as Downey, 1926 and Collins, 1961, in population surveys by Freire-Maiaetal (1958), Pelecanos (1969), Pons (1961) and also in twin studies Dahlberg (1926). Freire Maia (1958) observed sex differences after studying different population but Lai and Walsh

(1966) did not find any sex difference in the Whites, Australian and New Guinean population. Pons (1961) tried to show that patterns of hand clasping depends on age. As the age increases the percentage of the right hand clasper increases irrespective of sex,

Studies on hand clasping and arm folding on Indian population have also been carried out by Malhotra (1966-67), Malhotra and Bhanu (1966-67), Bansal (1968), Deka Mahapatra (1970), Veeraju and Satyanarayan (1971-72), Singh and Guleti (1978), Vijaya kumar etal (1978) and many other investigators.

## Materials and Methods

The Reddy are a Telugu speaking agricultural caste living in the Ganjam district of Orissa, which lies adjacent to the northern border of Andhra Pradesh. The present study brings out an investigation on hand clasping and arm folding of Reddy male and female. For the purpose unrelated Reddy male and female in the age range of 18 to 50 years of age from various villages under Rangeilunda Block of Ganjam district were selected. The data collected in 1986 include 106 male and 102 female. The patterns were recorded after careful observation.

## Results and Discussion

Table-I presents the percentage frequency of hand clasping among the Reddy caste. It is observed that the 'R' type hand claspers are more in case of both male (55.66 p. c.) and female (64.70 p. c.), the female showing a higher

percentage of 'R' type hand clasps than male. The sexual variation is not significant as seen from  $X^2$  value.

Table-2 presents the percentage frequency of the arm folding of the Reddy caste. It is observed that the Reddy male exhibit more 'R' type (52.83 p. c.) of arm folding while the Reddy female exhibit more 'L' type of arm folding (55.88 p. c.). But in total percentage 'L' type (51.44 p. c.) arm folders are more. But no sexual difference is observed from the  $X^2$  value.

Table-3 presents the association between hand clasping and arm folding. The chi-square value indicates that the association between hand clasping and arm folding is non-existent.

Table-4 presents percentage frequency of hand clasping and arm folding of some population with whom the present sample was compared. For comparison chi-square test was computed and the results are presented in table-5. The present sample was compared with the Nolia, and the Gadaba of Orissa and the Kolam, the Pradhan, the Raj Gond and the Chenchu of Andhra Pradesh. The Nolia is a Telugu speaking fishing group and the Godaba is a tribal group of Orissa where as the Kolam, the Pradhan, the Raj Gond and the Chenchu are the tribal population of Andhra Pradesh. The chi-square values of hand clasping comparison show that the Reddy is only statistically significant with the Chenchu of Andhra Pradesh and in arm folding the Reddy is statistically significant with the Pradhan, the Raj Gond and the Chenchu.

Table-6 presents percentage frequency of 'R' type of hand clasping and arm folding in some population of the world. It is observed that majority of the population exhibit higher frequency of 'R' type of hand clasping. The present sample of Reddy caste exhibit very high frequency of 'R' type (60.09 p. c.) and shows similarity with the Rajbond, the Pradhan of Andhra Pradesh. The Izhava of Kerala, the Bengalese of West Bengal and the Japanese population.

The table also shows that the percentage frequency of 'R' type of arm folding is comparatively low in population presented in the table. Except among the Russians who show a very high frequency of 'R' type of arm folding. The present sample of Reddy caste also exhibit low frequency of 'R' type of armfolding.

Vijaya Kumar et al (1978) suggests that the higher frequency of 'R' type of hand clasping and the corresponding high frequency of 'L' type of arm folding in various populations indicate that probably hand clasping and arm folding traits are independent of each other, and perhaps governed by genes at different loci. It has also been pointed out that (Geschwind, 1972) cerebral dominance of the right or left hemisphere may be responsible for left or right handedness. If these two traits are independently controlled by genes present at different loci, then they are probably not controlled by dominance of the same cerebral hemisphere.

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TABLE 1

*Frequency of hand clasping among the Reddy Caste*

Sex	No.	Right hand		Left hand		df	X <sup>2</sup>	Probability
		n	%	n	%			
Male	106	59	55.66	47	43.34	1	1.77	0.20 > p > 0.10
Female	102	66	64.70	36	35.29			
Total	208	125	60.09	83	39.90			

TABLE 2

*Frequency of Arm folding among the Reddy Caste*

Sex	No.	Right hand		Left hand		df	X <sup>2</sup>	Probability
		n	%	n	%			
Male	106	56	52.83	50	47.17	1	1.579	0.30 > p > 0.20
Female	102	45	44.12	57	55.88			
Total	208	101	48.56	107	51.44			

TABLE 3

*Association between hand clasping and arm folding*

Hand Clasping	Arm Folding	Observed Frequency	Expected Frequency	Difference	df	X <sup>2</sup>	Probability
L	L	39	40.70	3.70	1	1.096	0.30 > p < 0.20
R	R	57	60.70	3.70			
L	R	44	40.30	3.70			
R	L	68	64.30	3.70			

TABLE 4

## Hand Claspings and Arm Folding in some population

Population	Area	Source	Sex	No.	Hand Claspings			Arm Folding				
					R	%	L	R	%	L		
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Kolma ..	Andhra Pradesh ..	Vijaya Kumar Etal 1978	M	200	111	55.5	89	44.5	89	42.5	115	57.5
			F	100	52	52.0	48	48.0	48	48.0	52	52.0
Total			..	300	163	54.33	137	45.66	137	44.33	167	55.66
Pradhan ..	Ditto	..	M	75	45	60.0	30	40.0	28	37.3	47	62.7
			F	50	29	58.0	21	42.0	24	48.0	26	52.0
Total			..	125	74	59.20	51	40.80	52	41.60	73	58.40
Raj Gond	Ditto	..	M	150	88	58.7	62	41.3	59	39.3	91	60.7
			F	50	33	66.0	17	34.0	22	44.0	28	56.0
Total			..	200	121	60.50	79	39.5	81	40.50	119	59.50
Chenchu	Ditto	..	M	208	85	40.85	123	59.14	109	52.40	99	47.60
			F	165	77	46.67	88	45.82	103	62.42	62	37.58
Total			..	373	162	43.34	211	56.57	212	56.81	161	43.26
Nolia ..	Orissa	Padhi (UNPUB)	M	80	52	65.00	28	35.00	40	50.00	40	50.00
			F	75	40	53.33	35	46.66	30	40.00	45	60.00
Total			..	155	92	60.00	63	40.00	70	43.20	85	56.80
Gadaba ..	Orissa	Nanda (UNPUB)	M	109	60	55.05	49	44.95	58	53.21	51	46.79
			F	31	15	48.38	16	51.61	16	51.61	15	48.38
Total			..	140	75	53.57	65	46.53	74	52.85	66	47.14
Reddy ..	Orissa	Present study	M	106	59	55.66	67	43.34	56	52.83	50	47.17
			F	102	66	64.70	36	35.29	45	44.12	57	55.88
Total			..	208	125	60.09	103	39.90	101	48.56	107	51.44

TABLE 5

*Chi-square values obtained after comparing the Reddy caste with some population*

	df.	Chi-square value			
		Hand	Clasping Probability	Arm	Folding Probability
Reddy Vs. Nollia ..	} 1 for all	0.018	0.70 > p > 0.50	0.412	0.70 > p > 0.50
Reddy Vs. Gadaba ..		1.46	0.30 > p > 0.20	0.618	0.50 > p > 0.30
Reddy Vs. Kolama ..		1.66	0.20 > p > 0.10	0.881	0.50 > p > 0.30
Reddy Vs. Pradhan ..		0.023	0.80 > p > 0.90	3.03*	0.10 > p > 0.05
Reddy Vs. Raj Gond ..		0.008	0.95 > p > 0.90	2.002*	0.10 > p > 0.05
Reddy Vs. Chenchu ..		14.42*	p < 0.01	3.678*	0.10 > p > 0.05

\*Significant at 5 per cent level

TABLE 6

Frequency of 'R' type hand clasping and arm folding in same population

Population	Area	No.	Hand clasping R %	No.	Arm folding R %	Source
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Caucasoids	..	1566	55.2	1605	41.3	Freive-Mala and Almedia, 1966
Negroes	..	489	66.8	550	41.8	Ditto
Japanese	..	102	60.6	1012	44.0	Ditto
Russians	..	58	56.9	57	91.2	Ditto
Kolma	.. Andhra Pradesh	300	54.33	300	44.33	Vijay Kumar et al, 1978
Pradhan	.. Do.	125	59.20	125	41.60	Ditto
Raj Gond	.. Do.	200	60.50	200	40.50	Ditto
Chenchu	.. Do.	373	43.43	373	56.81	Ditto
Bagatha	.. Do.	480	48.3	480	48.1	Golla Reddy, 1978
Valmiki	.. Do.	115	47.4	115	53.3	Venketeswar Rao and Golla Reddy 1975.
Izaga	.. Kerala	100	62.0	..	..	Mahapatro and Bhanu, 1967
Korku	.. Maharashtra	205	52.68	205	51.70	Sing and Gulati, 1973
Bengalese	.. West Bengal	259	59.7	258	37.6	Chattopadhyaya, 1968
Gadaba	.. Orissa	570	55.4	570	56.7	Deka and Patojoshi, 1975
Gadaba	.. Do.	140	53.57	140	51.42	Nanda (UNPUB)
Oriya	.. Do.	664	55.42	664	42.66	Ghosh Malik, 1972
Nolia	.. Do.	155	60.00	155	43.20	Padhi (UNPUB)
Reddy	.. Do.	208	60.09	208	48.56	Present study

# Degree of persistence of untouchability and discrimination in the Caste and Tribal societies of Orissa

P. K. MISHRA (B)

The present paper mainly deals with, the outcome of investigations into the attitudes of *savarnas*, *adivasis* and other Harijan castes towards the Pana and the Ganda. It sets out to examine the trend of attitude and level of discrimination in a variety of situations and interactions with particular reference to Cuttack and Sundargarh districts of the coastal and western sub-cultural regions of Orissa, respectively. The data are drawn not only from Kotapur and Kulebira as the base villages of the two sub-cultural region in depth, but also from the near by villages of the two districts, from about seven hundred respondents.

### The Sample:

The respondents were drawn from different *jatis* and social strata to record their opinions as

well as the degree of agreement and disagreement through a common schedule. The majority of the respondents were between 21—45 years of age and particularly those who had the right of franchise, with three R's education and were known to be the elites in their circles. As the number of educated persons were comparatively less among the Harijans and *adivasis*, such respondents who took leading roles in the village affairs were included in the sample. Thus the sample includes the respondents who virtually controlled their respective *jati* activities and played decisive roles in both public and private spheres of village lives. From each *jati*, at least forty respondents were personally interviewed during the period from 1980 to 1986. The details of the sample are mentioned below for a comparative study.

District	Cuttack	Sundargarh
Social Strata	Jatis	Jatis
A. SAVARNA	.. 1. Brahman (B) .. 2. Khandayat (K) .. 3. Barika (Ba)	.. 1. Brahman (B') .. 2. Agaria (A') .. 3. Barika (Ba')
B. HARIJAN	.. 4. Dhoba (d) .. 5. Chamar (c) .. 6. Kandara (k) .. against Pana	.. 4. Dhoba (d') .. 5. Chamar (c') .. 6. Ghasi (g')
C. ADIVASI	Nil	7. Bhuiyan (Bh) 8. Khadia (Kh) 9. Kisan (Ki) .. against Ganda

\* The abbreviated *jati*-names are mentioned in brackets.

### Techniques of study :

As the attitudes and perceptions of everybody were not equal to a social fact in a hierarchical and segmental society, adequate opportunities were offered to the respondents to formulate, articulate and to express their ideas and actions. However, from the field observation it was noticed that some of them not only maintained distance, exaggerated and suppressed facts, but also quite a few of them remained indifferent, while some had greater confidence, conviction and commitment to their responses, although the researcher had tried to establish a good rapport with all of them.

With the help of an appropriate schedule, all the respondents were personally interviewed by the researcher during the period from 1980 to 1986. Data were collected on the aspects of visit into the streets and to houses, friendship, physical contact, property sale, temple entry, commensality, connubiality, ritual services, changing habits, political issues etc. The main thrust was to find out the attitudes on the practices of untouchability and other related forms of discriminations towards the Pana and Ganda, keeping in view the changing conditions of the society, and to study the level of discrimination made against them in both public and private spheres in order to assess their social status vis-a-vis others.

The schedule contained twenty-eight questions covering various aspects of the every day life mentioned above. For the purpose of analysis an attitude scale was constructed in local language after the pilot survey. The scale has been modelled on Lickert techniques to reflect not only the positive and negative attitudes, but also to record the varying forms of discrimination i. e. from the highest degree of discrimination to the lowest degree. Thus the attitude and opinion of respondents about each question against the five point scale were recorded. In the usual Lickert fashion, scoring was done by giving weights (indicated in brackets) for each response category as mentioned below.

- (a) completely agree [1].
- (b) agree [2].
- (c) indifferent and indecisive [3].
- (d) disagree [4] and
- (e) completely disagree [5].

Due care was exercised in administering the schedules to ensure that the respondents were seldom confessed or moved by the interviewer. Several check questions were included to ensure consistency in the response patterns. The analysed data of the five-point scale have been presented in terms of average score value for each caste/tribe of the sample. (See Annexure).

The present empirical data clearly show that the practice of untouchability and other related forms of discrimination obviously persist not only in coastal district of Cuttack, but also in western district of Sundargarh. Herewith an attempt has been made to analyse various responses, question-wise that are gathered through the schedule.

#### Q. 1. Do you like to visit Pana/Ganda streets ?

The tabulated data pertaining to the question suggest that the Barika of Cuttack show the highest degree of discrimination (2.84) than the Brahman (3.37) and Khandayat (3.37). Most of the Barika respondents replied : "they have no business with the Pana, hence there is no need of going to them". On the contrary, the Brahman and Khandayat mostly visit their streets in connection with the agricultural activities, or to procure labourers and often to contact the Pana rickshaw-pullers.

The Dhoba (3.05), Chamar (3.82) and Kandara (4.17) discriminate against the Pana co-villagers. It is, however, comparatively less than the *savarna*. The Dhoba display a higher degree of discriminatory attitude because the Pana most often vilify and disdain them for washing impure clothes. Moreover, the Dhoba visit their street rarely as they do not render any service, while the Chamar and Kandara frequent the Pana street often to pluck coconut and to choose a working partner for various manual and agricultural work. These days the economic interaction between the Pana and Kandara rather continue to increase than other *jatis*, but they still are touchy about close contact.

The sample of Sundargarh shows the trend of the discrimination similar to that of Cuttack. The Brahman (3.63), Agaria (4.27) and Bhuiyan (3.97) patrons usually frequent the Ganda streets to seek the latter's services, while the Barika (3.03), Dhoba (3.94) and Kisan (3.40) visit infrequently as they do not have any necessity.

However, all the *jatis* and *adivasis* of the district show certain laxity and liberal attitude against the Ganda as the severity of discrimination is apparently lower than it persists in Cuttack.

However, the Ghasi (4.89) seldom exhibit discriminatory attitude against the Ganda for the latter is relatively ritually superior to the former. Due to the disheartening treatment by the Ganda, the Ghasi rather refrain from going to their street unless there is an urgent work. It is said that the visit of the Ghasi pollutes the Ganda street. The attitudinal change of the higher *jatis* that tend towards some softening of approach to the Harijans can be traced in its genesis to the very necessity and the indispensability of the services of the latter for the vocational ends of the former.

### Q. 2. Do you like to sit with Pana/Ganda ?

The question seeks to ascertain the attitudes of the *jatis* with regard to sitting closely with the Pana/Ganda. The data suggest that the sitting behaviours of the respondents of different *jatis* register significant variations depending on situations. In order to project the concrete aspect of the behaviour and the corresponding attitudes, the situations of interactions are broadly categorized as private spheres and public spheres.

#### 2.1. Private sphere:

Though it connotes a wider area of interactions, the researcher has taken into consideration those spheres of interaction which operate in one's private dwelling.

Sitting close with a Pana/Ganda on the part of a *Savarna/Bhal Lok* is still strongly decried. Despite the former's desire to sit together with the latter, it is still an impossibility in practice as each of them shirk away when opportunity arises. Even now they are not allowed into the living rooms of a *Savarna/Bhal Lok* excepting a very few radical freedom fighters, who generally do not have caste barriers. Normally the *Savarna* and Harijan members do mutually discuss at Verandah and courtyard by maintaining an appropriate distance. Even the children who accompany the Harijans too, maintain a distance from the *Savarna/Bhal Lok*. Thus, conservative discriminatory attitude still prevails in private spheres.

The data from Cuttack district suggest that the attitude of the Barika respondents (1.74) is almost equal to that of the Brahman's (1.77)

against the Pana. The Khandayat respondents (2.60) on the other hand express that they do not mind sitting with the Pana because of their close traditional linkage (Lokapua) and are not so rigid as the Brahman and Barika.

Among the Scheduled Castes the discriminatory attitudes of the Dhoba (1.86) and Chamar (1.88) are equally rigid against the Pana, but the attitude of the Kandara respondents (2.33) is, however, in no way better than the Khandayat.

In Sundargarh, the Brahman respondents (1.28) strongly refuse to sit with the Ganda in private affairs. Next to them are the Barika (1.77) and Agarika (2.62) respondents, whose discriminatory attitudes very much resemble with their counterparts of Cuttack.

The Harijans like the Dhoba (1.81), Chamar (1.45) and Ghasi (1.38) have not shown any encouraging responses towards the Ganda, because the Ganda themselves do not like to sit with them for the fear of pollution. It indicates that the discrimination among the Harijans has the caste-bias and the segregative attitude, which is not to be found to the same extent among the tribals across the line of interaction with the Ganda. The interesting feature is that the tribes, viz. the Bhuiyan (1.87), Khadia (1.85) and Kisan (1.87), in fact, discriminate against the Ganda somewhat less than the Harijans.

#### 2.2. Public sphere

Particularly after 1960, the people of either district gradually became conscious about the laws of protective measures against discrimination. They have, more or less, realised that the practice of untouchability especially in public places is punishable. The instances of cases on ground of untouchability are not wanting in both the study areas. For such reasons, the *savarna/Bhal lok*, as well as the tribal groups, desist from any manifest discrimination against Harijan in public places, like hotels, cinema houses, public buses, schools/hostels/panchayat offices etc.

Invariably all the *Jatis & adivasis* in the sample have conceded a high degree of laxity and flexibility in their attitudes, except the Brahman respondents (1.97) of Cuttack. The rise of attitudinal values from rigidity to liberality is found to be almost double as recorded from most *Jatis* and *adivasis* compared to the private spheres. However, the Harijans of Cuttack have shown quite lenient and liberal

attitudes compared to their counterparts of Sundargarh. In spite of this fact, the sense of discrimination against the Pana/Ganda are still there with the respondents of either region.

**Q. 3. Do you like to sit with Pana/Ganda political leader?**

It is observed that the *savarnas* of Cuttack seldom wish to sit with the local political leaders of the Pana community. They do not think that a Pana political leader is in any way different from a common Pana, excepting the fact he has the ability and skill to speak to and keep contact with certain caste Hindu leaders of the State. However, when a Pana is recognized at the State level, he earns a relatively high esteem in the society. Most of the respondents of Cuttack, however, agree to sit with a Pana leader, if he is educated, neat and clean and has true leadership quality, but the Brahman and Barika respondents show little rigid attitude.

The data of Sundargarh show that caste Hindu people of the district are not that enthusiastic to sit with the Ganda political leaders. Thus it suggests that the people of Cuttack are more resilient than their counterparts in Sundargarh.

**Q.4. Do you like to have free mixing with Pana and Ganda ?**

It is an obvious fact that the *savarna/Bhal-lok* as well as other Harijans, avoid free mixing with the Pana/Ganda, particularly at one's own place and among the known people. Presupposing the pattern of interaction, four different zones of interaction are identified to record the differential attitudes, if any.

**4.1. In the Street**

The data of Cuttack signify that except the Kandara (2'65) and Khandayat ( 1'85) all other *jatis* continue decline to have free mixing with the Pana. Moreover, the Kandara and Khandayat respondents have expressed some reservations towards free mixing with the Pana, particularly in their own streets. Although the score value of Kandara shows a high degree of desire to have free mixing with the Pana, it is not so significant.

In Sundargarh also it does not show such high degree of free mixing with the Ganda, except the respondents of the Agaria (2'12), Chamar (2'37), Ghasi (2'58), and Khadia (2'6 ) communities. The reason is that these communities in

the past were highly discriminated against by the *Bhal-lok*. According to them free mixing is the essentials of community life and if we do not mix with them, then what is the necessity of keeping them inside the village. Thus the Agaia, non-Hinduized tribes and the very low percentage of Harijans have more empathy towards the Ganda than others.

**4.2 In the village**

In comparison with the interaction within the village street, the Brahman (1'42), Khandayat (2'00), Chamar (2'16) and Kandara (3'40) have shown a better attitude towards free mixing at village level. In case of Sundargarh though the ethnic groups have shown a liberal and catholic attitude towards the Ganda, the degree of catholicity is not so high as observed in Cuttack.

**4.3. Outside the village**

The respondents of both the districts bear a still high degree of liberal attitude in regard to their free mixing with the Pana/Ganda outside their village as there is less chance of intimidation or harassment by the fellow caste men.

**4.4. In Public Places**

The data indicates that informants of every *jati* responded in clearer terms regarding their attitude towards discrimination in public places. But the degree of liberality is not as high as it is expected to be. The Dhoba (4'27), Chamar (4'15) and Kandara (4'57) of Cuttack have shown almost no discrimination against the Pana. Whereas in Sundargarh except the Agaria (4'10) and Chamar (4'22), others have not harboured a very liberal attitude towards the Ganda in their interactions in public places.

**5. Do you like to allow Pana/Ganda to your house ?**

**5.1. In the Village**

The data indicate that the Brahman (1'30), and Khandayat (1'90), however, allow the Pana to enter into the out-house for keeping various agricultural products, while the Dhoba (1'05) and Chamar (1'06) seldom allow them. In Sundargarh, except the Agaria (1'70), others almost equally discriminate against the Ganda as regards the entry into the out-houses even. In reality no caste or tribe like their presence in the house unless there is some work with them.

## 5.2. In the Town

The same respondents have shown their eagerness with certain amount of liberal attitude towards the entry of the Pana/Ganda to their houses, if located in towns. In towns, they are not afraid of their *Jati* men, and the latter have little scope to know about this, that is, entry of Harijans to their houses. The data however, clearly indicates that respondents of Cuttack have shown a high degree of liberality than their counterparts in Sundargarh.

## 6. Do you like to sell your agricultural land to any Pana/Ganda ?

The data from Cuttack do not show any encouraging response owing to the fact that most respondents have the opinion that by selling agricultural land to the Pana, they would decrease the number of landless people who usually supply the agricultural labour to them at their doors. However, among others, the Khandayat and Dhoba (2'80) offer certain amount of consent to the proposal.

In Sundargarh, the Bhuiyan and other tribal groups express their disagreement for a different reason. That they do not like to sell their *bhata-handi* (rice-pot) which symbolises the agricultural land, to a low caste. But the Harijans like Dhoba (2'58), Chamar (2'04) and Ghasi (2'12) have shown not so rigid an attitude to the issue. The people of Cuttack are, more or less, liberal in selling their agricultural land than the respondents of Sundargarh.

## 7. Do you like to sell your homestead land to any Pana/Ganda, if in distress ?

The data provide comparative views of the responses recorded from Cuttack and Sundargarh. It is learnt that the people of both the regions show more conservative attitude towards the homestead land than the agricultural land. Customarily, the Harijan dwellings are located outside the main streets of the village; therefore, most *savarna* respondents disagree with the proposal. The interesting feature is that the Harijans too express unwillingness to buy homestead land from *savarnas* inside the village. The data further reveal that the respondents of Cuttack are relatively more unwilling than their counterparts in Sundargarh. The reason is that for the latter homestead land is easily available and the cost of homestead land is not an exorbitant as in Cuttack.

## 8. Do you like to admit Pana/Ganda into village temples?

During the interview the researcher comes across a number of opinions regarding the temple entry by the Pana/Ganda. The data of the either region indicate that the Barika (1'30) of Cuttack and the Bhuiyan (1'75) of Sundargarh vehemently object to it, while other caste groups and tribal communities offer mixed views and reactions. The Brahmans of Cuttack (2'12) and of Sundargarh (2'16) remain mostly indifferent for the fact that they are unnecessarily accused and blamed for hindering the progress of Harijans. They, further, say that they only worship in the temple, but the onus lies on others to protect the sanctity of temples. So why should they be a party to the denial of the rights of temple entry to the Pana? The non Hinduized tribes of Sundargarh, viz. the Khadia (2'45) and Kishan (2'42) also mostly maintain indifferent attitude as the matter relates to an ethical issue of the Hindus. On the other hand some Harijans of both the regions argue that there is no reason as to why they are disallowed into the temple, when they believe and propitiate the same god and goddess as the *savarna/Bhal-lok* do. They are of the opinion that they may be allowed to cross the temple precincts as the Dhoba who get the *darsan* (view) of the deity. However, Harijans like Chamar and Ghasi of Sundargarh refuse to enter the temple for their highly impure occupations.

## 9. Do you like to purchase groceries from Pana/Ganda grocers or shop-keepers?

It is evident that the *savarna/Bhal-lok* usually discriminate against the Harijan shop-keepers. Therefore, the Pana/Ganda are conventionally disallowed to open grocery shops. But in recent years there are grocery shops run by the Pana/Ganda. From experience, it can be said that the people generally approach unhesitatingly the shops from where goods are sold in cheaper rates particularly in weekly markets. It is because of the fact that the weekly market is epitomised as a pilgrimage centre where pollution barrier is deemed negligible. But within a village the people seldom purchase goods from the shops without knowing the ritual status of the shop-keeper. For such reasons, two important situations are identified to note the differential attitudes of the respondents, and these are (1) within village, and in (2) weekly markets.

### 9.1. Within the village

The data show that in Cuttack, except the Khandayat (2.40) and Kandara (2.65), other *jati* almost decline to purchase goods from the Pana shopkeepers. Furthermore, the Khandayat and the Kandara respondents agree to purchase dry, raw and packed items only from them. The *jati* people and *adibasis* of Sundargarh are not, however, as reluctant to purchase grocery items from the Ganda shopkeepers as the respondents of Cuttack.

### 9.2. Weekly market

The degree of discrimination in the weekly markets in Cuttack region is viewed liberally. Thus, there are two distinct behavioural patterns observed with regard to the purchase of groceries from the Pana grocers. In Sundargarh, however, the respondents behave almost similarly in both the situations. The data clearly indicates a uniform behavioural pattern exhibited during the purchase of groceries from the Ganda grocers whether it is within the village or in weekly markets no matter. In other words, it also shows that the degree of discrimination against the Ganda is relatively less than the Pana in this respect.

### 10. Do you like to invite a known Pana/Ganda to any of your ceremonies ?

Customarily the Harijans are invited by the *Savarna/Bhal-lok* and *vice versa* to attend various ceremonial occasions to strengthen mutual relationship. But the hospitality normally accorded to the lower *jatis*, particularly the Pana/Ganda is rather demeaning. Therefore, most Pana/Ganda hesitate to attend the festive occasions of higher *jatis*. However, the established relationships between the higher and lower *jatis* make them visit each other. During the enquiry, it has been observed that the attitudes and the related behavioural patterns are of varying order with regard to the following categories of invitees : (1) an intimate friend, (2) as co-villager and (3) as a known gentleman.

#### 10.1. As intimate friend

It has been found that most intimate friends are often tied to each other by ritual friendship bonds, and consequently they are treated with utmost care and honour irrespective of their *jatis*. The data suggest that most of the higher castes invite their Pana/Ganda intimate friends than other low *jatis* in both the regions which

reflects their closer association and vocational linkage. The fate of such invitation is inevitably higher in Sundargarh district than Cuttack.

#### 10.2. As co-villagers

In fact, the well-to-do persons usually invite all co-villagers. The most common practice is to invite those Pana/Ganda who can render fair services or have been rendering services to the host. From this point of view, most of the *jatis* refrain from inviting the Pana/Ganda as their co-villagers, except the Brahman (2.85) and Khandayat (3.72). In Sundargarh the custom of invitation to the Ganda as co-villagers is fairly maintained by the higher *jatis* than their counterparts of Cuttack district.

#### 10.3. As known gentlemen

It is the usual tendency among the *Savarna/Bhal-lok* that they never consider the Pana/Ganda as gentlemen. The term is applied to those educated higher *jati* members who maintain a good moral character. However, a few leaders of their communities can be considered as gentlemen. Therefore, the response to such question seemed extremely poor.

### 11. Do you like to accept cooked food from educated Pana/Ganda leaders ?

Eating cooked food from a lower *jati* other than one's own customarily degrades one's ritual status. Acceptance of cooked food from Harijans not only causes severe internal pollution, but also may lead to the expulsion of a *Savarna/Bhal-lok* from his caste. For such reason cooked food from a Pana/Ganda is tabooed, despite the latter is either educated or has high secular status in the society.

Temporary social boycott is though no longer a consequential practice, yet the people bear an abhorrence towards the food prepared by the Pana/Ganda. The data of Cuttack and Sundargarh reveal that the respondents of the sample have registered a very high degree of rigid commensal attitude. It ranges from 1.22 to 1.85 in Cuttack, while in Sundargarh it is 1.00 to 1.67. Moreover, the tribal groups nurture a still higher degree of discrimination against the Ganda than the Brahman (1.33) and Agaria (1.67). Except the Ghasi (4.56), all other caste and tribal groups express disagreement to accept cooked food from the Ganda and no caste group agrees to receive the same from the Pana in Cuttack district.

## 12. Do you like to accept invitation from known Pana/Ganda ?

Customarily all caste and tribal groups are obliged to receive the invitation from the Pana/Ganda, if the latter are known either as an intimate friend, co-villager and a gentleman.

### 12.1. As intimate friend

The data of Cuttack suggest that most intimate friends from the Pana community do invite the *savarna* to maintain mutual relationships. It is found that the Barika respondents (2.26) somewhat discriminate against the Pana in this regard compared to the Brahman (2.37) and Khandayat (2.83). Among the *asavarnas*, the Dhoba (2.03) discriminate the most than the Chamar (3.15) and the Kandara (3.20). However, the respondents of Sundargarh exhibit a high degree of liberal attitude than their counterparts of Cuttack. Furthermore, the tribal groups harbour a still higher degree of liberal and positive attitude than the Brahman (3.57) and Agaria (4.15). Thus the status of the Ganda is acknowledged relatively higher than the Pana in view of the empirical data.

### 12.2. As co-villager

In contrary to the Pana of Cuttack, the Ganda offer the invitations more frequently to the *Bhal-lok* as the data show.

### 12.3. As known gentleman:—

Compared to the above two categories, it is speculated, the Pana/Ganda may likely to invite the *savarna/Bhal-lok* as gentlemen. But it shows a reverse trend, as the latter do not prefer to be invited as gentlemen to attend some functions arranged by the Pana/Ganda. However, the *Bhal-lok* respondents have not shown such rigid and negative attitudes.

## 13. Do you like to dine with Pana/Ganda ?

The responses pertaining to the question have been collected with regard to three different situations, viz., in private spheres, in social ceremonies and in public places.

### 13.1. Private sphere:-

The data of Cuttack show that the score values of the *jatis* of the sample do not rise above 2.00, which signify that these *jatis* express their disagreement to dine with the Pana. Similar trend of responses are received from the respondents of Sundargarh, except that the Ghasi

(4.15) who have fairly agreed to dine with the Ganda. Compared to Sundargarh, the respondents of Cuttack rather exhibit some degree of flexibility in this matter.

### 13.2. Social ceremonies

It refers to the occasions of marriage and village community feasts. In this case, the degree of discrimination is recorded to be the highest than two other situations in both the sub-cultural region. In Cuttack, when the Barika, Dhoba and Chamar (each 1.00) totally disagree to dine with the Pana, some of the Brahman (1.15) and Khandayat (1.62) and Kandara (1.45) expressed their liberal attitudes. On the other hand, the respondents of Sundargarh including the tribal groups, show a high degree of negative attitude in this regard than their counterparts of Cuttack.

### 13.3. Public Places

The data clearly show a substantial rise of agreements in favour of dining with the Pana/Ganda in the either region. It is found that most of the *savarna/Bhal-lok* express their willingness to dine for the fear of constitutional provisions. But among others, the Kandara (3.70) of Cuttack and Ghasi (3.42) of Sundargarh have really offered their most positive responses to dine with the Pana and Ganda respectively.

## 14. Do you like to bring a suitable Pana/Ganda bride for your son?

The usual response to the question is that no one in the rural area thinks of getting a bride for the family belonging to a caste other than his own. And the bride particularly from Pana/Ganda caste is beyond one's imagination even if she is suitable in all other respects. Thus, as parent and as well-wisher, they would never support the idea though our constitution approves of it. Many respondents fight shy of this issue on the plea that there is no death of girls in their own caste.

By accepting a Pana/Ganda bride as marriage partner, one not only loses his caste identity, but also the village, lineage and all traditional links with other kins. It is rather a suicidal attempt for the family. Therefore, a sensible man cannot think of going for such intercaste marriage at the cost of his peaceful family-life. Above all, selecting a bride for a Hindu family involves several socio-religious considerations.

The data of Cuttack district reveal that the *savarna* respondents rather show liberal attitude than the Dhoba (1.12), although the latter belong to the *asavarna* stratum. The *asavarna* like Chamar (1.44) and Kandara (2.03), however express a higher degree of liberal attitude than all the *jatis*. The data of Sundargarh also claim that Chamar (1.72) and Ghasi (3.48) have depicted a still higher degree of congenial attitude than their counter parts of Cuttack. Moreover, it is found that the tribals are equally rigid in this matter for reasons of their own like the higher *jatis* who consistently nurture a very conservative attitude as their score values do not rise beyond 1.25.

**15. Do you like to negotiate a marriage for your daughter with a suitable Pana/Ganda groom ?**

In this case the responses and reactions are in no way dissimilar from the previous question. Some respondents, however, give the full assent to it. They argue that when a father has a longing to have his daughter enjoy all possible material comforts, what is the harm if a Harijan (Pana/Ganda) groom is selected from an I. A. S./I. P. S. cadre or from equally prospective positions. Many of them seem to substantially agree with this view, but they are highly afraid of the detrimental *socio-cultural* consequences. For such social constraints, the practice of intercaste marriage is still an ideology in this democratic country.

One of the major constraints is that the younger unmarried brother and sister normally face serious problems at the time of their marriages. They hardly receive good marriage proposals from high castes and so-called respectable families. During the interview, it was cited that Mr. X, who belonged to a higher *jati* and who had married a Pana woman failed to find a suitable bride/groom from higher *jatis* for his son/daughter. He received a number of proposals only from Pana community, instead. Hence giving a son/daughter in marriage to a member of low caste is to degrade one's caste status once for all. Similar examples are also put forward by the respondents of Sundargarh. It is further found that those who agree to the question initially, also disagree at the last moment when they are informed about its dire consequences.

In Sundargarh, the Dhoba (1.62), Chamar (4.73), Ghasi (3.52) and Kisan (1.45) respondents

though score differently, have accepted the matter relatively liberally than others. The *jatis* of Cuttack do express conservative attitudes and do not differ at all in their attitudes whether it is a Pana groom/bride.

**16. Would you have objections? If their is a love marriage between:**

- 16.1. Your son and a Pana/Ganda girl;
- 16.2. Your daughter and a Pana/Ganda boy;
- 16.3. Your brother and a Pana/Ganda girl;
- 16.4. Your sister and a Pana/Ganda boy;

It is the consensus that love marriage is equivalent to registered marriage, so the parents or guardians have no legal right to raise voice against it. Under the circumstances, the marriage has to be accepted overtly; but the point is that whether the family members would accept cooked food prepared by a Pana/Ganda girl and whether she can offer oblations the manes on ceremonial occasions. These, infact, create recurring problems in a family. Therefore, parents are averse to the idea of love-marriage particularly with a Pana/Ganda boy or girl.

Comparing the data it has been found that the respondents of Cuttack show liberal attitudes than those of Sundargarh. The caste and tribe, groups of either region give almost uniform and similar type of opinion whether it pertains to their son or daughter, but with regard to their brothers and sisters, they offer a fairly liberal opinion than the former because they can disown any responsibility in this matter. This data clearly show that the castes of Cuttack foster a liberal attitude than the castes and tribes of Sundargarh. Except the Ghasi of Sundargarh, the *asavarnas* of Cuttack also exhibit a high degree of liberal attitude than their counterparts of Sundargarh.

**17. Would you like to have services from Pana/Ganda?**

Traditional practice is that the Pana/Ganda render various services to the *savarna/Bhal-lok* though they assume the stigma of untouchability. Among which the ritual, domestic and agricultural services are of utmost importance.

**17.1. Ritual Service**

The *savarna* of Cuttack are largely in favour of utilising the ritual services of the Pana as it is obligatory for them. But most *asavarnas* do not seek the ritual services of the Pana, excepting

certain manual jobs. In respect of the ritual services, the responses of the Brahman (3.90), Khandayat (3.55) and Barika (3.46) are higher compared to the Dhoba (1.75), Chamar (2.25) and Kandara (1.12). It signifies that the *savarnas* discriminate less than the *asavarnas*, while the Pana render ritual services. Similar trend in the data have also been recorded from Sundargarh, where it is found that the service relationships are based on their traditional linkages with the Ganda. Moreover, compared to the Brahman (3.76), the responses of the Chamar (1.11) and Ghasi (1.00) are quite lower and conservative. The tribal groups like the Bhuiyan (1.10), Khadia (1.00) and Kisan (1.00) too demonstrate negative attitude towards the service.

#### 17.2. Domestic chores:

The respondents of either region express their disagreement to engage the Pana/Ganda in their household activities. The degree of disagreement shown in Cuttack is as high as in Sundargarh.

#### 17.3. Agricultural Work:

The data in this regard suggest that almost all categories of respondent require the services of the Pana/Ganda, including the Harijans and tribes of either region.

#### 18. Would you like to serve for Pana/Ganda, if required?

The *savarna* of Cuttack and the *Bhal-lok* of Sundargarh sub-cultural regions express very conservative opinions as regards rendering of their services to the Pana/Ganda. As the opinions of the respondents differ remarkably, it seems convenient to deal with the items independently.

#### 18.1. Rituals:

It is observed that excepting the approved ritual services, the *jatis* of Cuttack totally refuse to render any ritual service as it would be objected to by their caste members. Compared to the Brahman (1.20) of Cuttack, the Brahman (1.10) of Sundargarh express a high degree of disapproval. The Barika (1.56) is more liberal than the Barika (1.00) of Sundargarh. In compared to the higher *jatis*, the tribal groups of Sundargarh have liberal attitude towards the Ganda.

#### 18.2. Domestic chores :

The concerned data show that the degree of discrimination is very high in both the regions,

#### 18.3. Agricultural works :

The noteworthy feature is that there is no such bitter hatred and discrimination against the Pana/Ganda in this regard as agricultural works are considered catholic. Though the *jatis* and *adivasis* do not abruptly decline to render such services to the Pana/Ganda, they, however, express the prevalent notion of demeaning social position by rendering services to low castes. The responses in this context is quite positive, unlike the former two.

#### 19. Do you think that Pana/Ganda are more dirty and unclean than you are ?

Traditionally the Pana/Ganda are discriminated on the ground of being dirty and unclean. They have considerably changed their life-style, but how the villagers belonging to different castes conceive them in terms of dress and personal hygiene is discussed below.

#### 19.1. In Dresses :

The data suggest that, in Cuttack, except the Brahman (1.87) others do not discriminate much against the Pana with regard to dress. The Kandara (4.20) do not discriminate at all compared to Dhoba (2.37) and Chamar (2.05). In Sundargarh the degree of discrimination against the Ganda in this regard is quite lower than it is in Cuttack District. The tribal groups rather show liberal attitude than the caste groups, while other Harijans express very high liberal attitudes.

#### 19.2. Personal hygiene :

Personal cleanliness plays a dominant role in affecting the discriminating attitude of higher *jatis* in both the places. Except Kandara who think that they keep comparatively clean, all feel that there is a little to notice by way of improvement. Particularly, among the respondents of Sundargarh the Chamar and Ghasi admit that Ganda have been careful enough to keep themselves clean.

#### 20. Do you feel that Pana/Ganda are eschewing unclean practices ?

Essentially the Pana/Ganda like other Harijan castes in the State followed Sanskritization and have eschewed certain unclean practices. Except the Brahmans (2.85) others have given a high opinion in favour of the Pana that they have eschewed some of their unclean practices. Compared to the data of Cuttack a still favourable remark was received from the respondents of Sundargarh about the Ganda.

Thus it indicates that the Ganda have eschewed relatively a large number of unclean practices than the Pana.

**21. Do Pana/Ganda emulate modern way of living ?**

Referring to the data of the previous question, it has been ascertained that Pana/Ganda are emulating modern ways of living more conspicuously. The process of modernization appeals to them more than sanskritization as the responses of all categories of respondents range above 4. Most castes including the Brahmans (4.15 and 4.10) of Cuttack and Sundargarh respectively speak highly of emulating modernity while the *adivasis* do not subscribe to any such view.

It is further found that the Pana are more amenable to contact with modern ways and amenities than that of the Ganda because of the geographical condition of Cuttack district.

**22. Are Pana/Ganda following your way of life ?**

(Refined language, name, surname, dress, food and rituals)

The data relating to Cuttack district indicate that the Pana are following the way of life of the Khandayat (the dominant and elite caste of the area) (4.62) mostly than taking to the way of Brahman. Whereas, in Sundargarh, the Ganda follow the customs of the Agaria (the dominant and elite caste of the area) (4.65), rather than Bhuiyan (4.60). In fact, the responses suggest that the Pana/Ganda prefer to follow the way of life of non-Brahmans in most cases, because numerically Brahmans are a minor group.

**23. Do Pana/Ganda imitate the customs of higher castes ?**

(Brahman, Khandayat/Brahman, Agaria and Hinduized Bhuiyan)

The data of either region suggest that the Pana/Ganda obviously imitate the customs of higher castes including the Hinduized tribes. Data collected through personal interviews from the Pana/Ganda respondents also corroborate the fact that they mostly imitate the customs of dominant castes/tribes of their respective areas, in spite of their discrimination against them. In Cuttack district, the Pana mostly follow the customs of Khandayat (4.35) not those of Brahman (3.95). The lower castes like Dhoba, Chamar and Kandara do have identical views.

In Sundargarh district, the Ganda largely imitate the customs of Agaria (4.77) and Hinduized Bhuiyan (4.35) not those of the Brahman (3.97). Thus the non-Brahman castes, viz. Khandayat in Cuttack and Agaria/Bhuiyan (tribe) in Sundargarh have been regarded as the positive reference groups by the Pana and the Ganda respectively.

**24. Do Pana/Ganda harbour malice against caste Hindus ?**

In the past the Pana/Ganda harboured malice towards the caste Hindus (or *savarnas*) as the latter were the root cause of their anguish and discriminatory status. The respondents of Cuttack, particularly the Brahman (3.90) feel that the Pana are generally discontent with them as they do not render any kind of ritual services to them.

The Barika (3.67) and Dhoba (4.00) also have responded in like manner. The Khandayat (3.85), on the other hand, try to dominate over them by imposing various socio-religious prohibitions. Further, it is found that the Pana are again malicious towards the Chamar (3.65) and Kandara (3.60) for the latter still discriminate against them.

The respondents of Sundargarh, though offer identical opinions regarding the issue, the degree of resentment over the caste Hindus is relatively less than the *jatis* of Cuttack. The difference in this context is that the respondents including the Harijans relate their cause of anguish with the government which has failed in its mission of accelerating adequate socio-economic upliftments and removal of caste discrimination. Some respondents, however, make their destiny responsible for their misery. The analysis, of course, indicates that the Pana bear more malice towards higher *jatis* than the Ganda towards the *Bhal-lok* possibly because the former are more discriminated against than the latter.

**25. Do Pana/Ganda deserve Government help for their uplift ?**

Despite the favourable opinion in this regard, the respondents of either region did deny the possibility of development through Government help. The Brahman (3.93) and the Barika (3.84) of Cuttack agree that the Pana appear as genuinely needy fellows of their village community. At the same time, the researcher records the negative views of some respondents, who have stated that due to various infra-structural inadequacies and deficiencies the Pana

could not succeed in achieving their goal even though Governmental help has been provided to them. The Scheduled Caste communities like the Dhoba (4.65), Chamar (4.70) and Kandara (4.60), however, plead for the cause of the Pana.

Some of the respondents of Sundargarh have expressed disagreement on the issue and some of them are slightly sympathetic. The respondents, viz., the Brahman (3.28), Agaria (3.40), Barika (3.84) and Bhuiyan (3.65) showed little concern. The interesting feature is that the Dhoba (2.74) who have mostly given the negative response, suppose that Governmental help rather alleviate their poverty, because they become optimistic and seldom care to labour hard to earn bread through their own endeavour. According to those respondents, the Governmental assistance has an adverse impact on the prosperity of the Ganda. This sort of attitude, indeed, hinders the development of the Ganda in the region.

**26. Do you know that there are protective measures for Pana/Ganda ?**

The enquiry reveals that most *savarna* respondents of Cuttack are well aware of the protective measures against the discrimination meant for the Harijan (Pana/Ganda) communities than their counterparts of Sundargarh. They have the opinion that the constitutional measures lie mostly in pen and paper, and have little relevance to their normal way of life. The data further suggest that the Brahman (4.50/4.37), Khandayat/Agaria (4.55/4.37) are more conscious and aware than the Barika (3.72/3.61). The tribal groups such as the Bhuiyan (3.70), Khadia (3.35) and Kisan (3.40) have less knowledge about the protective measures than the *savarna* of Cuttack and Sundargarh, despite the fact that it is also meant for them.

**27. Do Pana/Ganda have some honourable status as yours in the society ?**

This is one of delicate issues, but the brief responses enable one to conceive certain cognitive features of the respondents about the status system in rural areas.

Though the higher *jatis* admit that the Harijans should enjoy equal status with them, the responses of the caste Hindus of Cuttack and Sundargarh seem to possess traditional conservative values as they all responded in complete agreement. It obviously means that the Brahman (1.95/1.60), Khandayat/Agaria

(1.87/1.82), Barika (1.75/1.92) and the tribes like Bhuiyan (1.75), Khadia (1.72) and Kisan (1.65) do hesitate to acknowledge the status of the Pana/Ganda as equal with theirs within the common life pattern in the village. However the Dhoba (2.33), Chamar (2.10), Kandara (2.72) of Cuttack and the Ghasi (3.81) of Sundargarh expressed modest views regarding the equality of status among the lower caste and tribal groups.

**28. Are you (Harijan communities) aware of the constitutional safeguards and protective measures meant for your welfare ?**

As indicated earlier there are a number of special provisions which the Harijan communities do not know in detail, and only have little idea about them. They know well that untouchability has been abolished, equal status and right have been accorded and certain reservations are available to them in service, educational institutions and in legislature. In fact, the Harijan communities are made conscious about the special provisions by their local leaders who often discuss the matter with regard to the implementation of such provisions so as to strengthen their rights in the society and to win their votes during elections.

The analysis of the responses to the question indicates that the Scheduled Caste communities particularly the Dhoba of Cuttack and Sundargarh (4.23 and 4.00) are relatively more conscious and aware of the constitutional safeguards and protective measures than the Pana (4.15) and Ganda (4.05). The level of awareness, in this regard, of Chamar (4.02) and Ghasi (3.30) is still lower than the Pana/Ganda but they are no more ignorant about it.

**Conclusion**

The survey shows some trends of change clearly marking off the present stage of socialisation from the phase of stagnation. The Harijans have become gradually aware of the fundamental rights granted and safeguarded also by the Constitution and some protective measures at the State initiative. This has resulted in relaxation of caste rigidity on one hand and more assertion on the other.

The educated members of higher *jatis* show a much more liberal attitude towards acknowledging equality of status of the Harijans though they have not yet come forward to bring out any

drastic change. Perhaps some factors like reservation and threat across the *jati*-frontiers have dampened their initiative. There is also the presence of a large chunk of the illiterates who may put up resistance for measures to ensure social mobility for the Harijans.

The socialisation, however modest, owes its impetus to frequent contacts between the political leaders and the communities of Harijans mainly at the time of electioneering. Even when the election is over some contacts with the middle echelon of power are not quite infrequent. This is an encouraging trend for socio-politicisation which will ultimately ensure caste-mobility, upliftment and enlightenment.

In respect of commensality and connubiality there has been no considerable change and the traditional inhibitions remain a stumbling block.

However, in the public sphere there are noticeable changes as far as the Harijans interact in most circumstances of public life. Responses as the index of attitudes bring to light a trend towards equality and secularisation.

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ANNEXURE

An Attitude-Survey of Savarnas (Caste Hindus), Harijans and Adivasis (Tribes) in two districts of Orissa

Question	District	Caste Hindus			Harijans			Tribes		
		Brahman	Khandayat/ Agaria	Barika	Dhoba	Chamar	Kandara/ Ghasi	Bhuinya	Khadia	Kisan
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
1. Do you like to visit Pana/ Ganda streets ?	CTC SNG	.. ..	3:37 4:27	2:84 3:03	3:05 3:40	3:82 3:94	4:17 4:89	.. 3:97	.. 3:92	.. 3:40
2. Do you like to sit with Pana/Ganda ?										
2.1. In private sphere	CTC	..	2:60	1:74	1:86	1:88	2:33	..	..	..
2.2. In public sphere	SNG	..	2:62	1:77	1:81	1:45	1:38	1:87	1:85	1:87
	CTC	..	4:02	3:50	3:65	4:10	4:15	..	..	..
	SNG	..	4:05	3:30	3:35	3:44	3:74	3:27	3:42	3:40
3. Do you like to sit with Pana/Ganda political leaders?	CTC SNG	.. ..	4:40 4:12	3:99 3:46	4:40 3:57	4:15 3:49	4:37 3:46	.. 3:47	.. 3:15	.. 3:10
4. Do you like to have free mixing with Pana/Ganda ?										
4.1. In your street	CTC	..	1:85	1:32	1:87	1:65	2:65	..	..	..
	SNG	..	2:12	1:38	1:22	2:37	2:58	1:42	2:62	2:27
4.2. In your village	CTC	..	2:00	1:41	1:92	2:16	3:40	..	..	..
	SNG	..	2:25	1:46	2:63	2:55	2:75	2:65	2:70	2:37
4.3. Outside village	CTC	..	3:30	2:20	2:35	2:76	4:05	..	..	..
	SNG	..	3:62	2:69	3:09	3:34	2:98	3:20	3:27	2:82
4.4. In public places	CTC	..	3:45	3:87	4:27	4:15	4:57	..	..	..
	SNG	..	4:10	3:45	3:38	4:23	3:87	3:75	3:75	3:37

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
5. Do you like to allow Pana/Ganda to your house ?										
5.1. In villages	CTC	1:30	1:90	1:27	1:05	1:06	1:45	..	..	..
	SNG	1:10	1:70	1:30	1:39	1:40	1:32	1:30	1:42	1:35
5.2. In towns	CTC	2:27	3:40	2:21	2:55	1:83	2:72	..	..	..
	SNG	2:10	2:37	2:15	2:23	1:88	1:65	1:90	1:85	1:65
6. Do you like to sell your agricultural land to any Pana/Ganda ?	CTC	2:27	2:80	1:97	2:80	2:15	2:20	..	..	..
	SNG	2:05	2:20	1:76	2:58	2:04	2:12	1:87	2:17	2:07
7. Do you like to sell your homestead land to any Pana/Ganda, if in distress ?	CTC	1:27	1:80	1:14	1:45	1:12	1:53	..	..	..
	SNG	1:88	1:90	1:38	2:01	1:95	2:10	1:50	1:67	1:75
8. Do you like to admit Pana/Ganda into village temples ?	CTC	2:12	2:67	1:30	2:45	2:84	2:57	..	..	..
	SNG	2:16	2:22	2:07	2:38	3:25	3:48	1:75	2:45	2:42
9. Do you like to purchase groceries from Pana/Ganda grocers/shop keepers ?	CTC	1:57	2:40	1:66	1:77	2:18	2:65	..	..	..
9.1. Within village	SNG	2:07	2:15	1:84	2:73	4:75	4:90	2:16	2:67	2:77
9.2. Weekly markets	CTC	1:82	2:65	2:05	2:25	2:35	3:53	..	..	..
	SNG	1:91	2:25	1:34	2:81	4:87	4:92	2:17	2:80	3:00
10. Do you like to invite your known Pana/Ganda to any of your ceremonies ?										
10.1. As intimate friends	CTC	3:45	3:57	2:94	2:83	4:50	2:95	..	..	..
	SNG	4:49	4:55	4:46	3:25	4:38	3:46	4:40	4:47	4:55
10.2. As co-villagers	CTC	2:85	3:72	1:49	2:45	2:08	1:48	..	..	..
	SNG	3:20	3:95	1:69	2:08	2:52	1:95	3:75	3:67	3:47
10.3. As known Gentlemen:	CTC.	1:82	1:95	1:27	1:00	1:82	1:25	..	..	..
	SNG.	1:62	1:75	1:23	1:64	1:40	1:36	1:67	1:70	1:72

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(8)	(9)	(10)
11.	Do you like to accept cooked food from educated Pana/Ganda leaders?	..	1:35	1:85	1:22	1:37	1:38	1:43	..	..
		..	1:33	1:67	1:00	1:56	1:03	4:56	1:27	1:24
12.	Do you like to accept invitations from known Pana/Ganda?	..	2:37	2:83	2:26	2:03	3:15	3:20	..	..
12.1.	As an intimate friend:	..	3:57	4:15	3:53	4:26	4:31	4:71	4:37	4:23
12.2.	As co-villagers:	..	1:27	1:83	1:25	1:47	1:62	2:15	..	..
		..	2:26	3:07	1:84	2:07	2:76	2:92	3:15	2:85
12.3.	As known gentlemen:	..	1:47	2:40	1:25	1:20	1:02	1:30	..	..
		..	2:12	2:77	1:49	1:58	1:07	1:20	2:72	1:70
13.	Do you like to dine with Pana/Ganda.?	..	1:45	1:97	1:32	1:77	1:50	1:93	..	..
13.1.	In private sphere:	..	1:42	1:65	1:15	1:49	1:77	4:15	1:47	1:52
13.2.	In social ceremonies: (marriage, village community feast, etc.):	..	1:15	1:62	1:00	1:00	1:00	1:45	..	..
		..	1:05	1:15	1:00	1:03	1:45	3:61	1:00	1:02
13.3.	In Public places:	..	2:57	1:93	2:33	2:93	1:88	3:70	..	..
		..	2:28	2:77	1:76	2:44	2:84	3:42	2:45	2:25
14.	Do you like to bring a suitable Pana/Ganda bride for your son?	..	1:25	1:37	1:33	1:12	1:44	2:03	..	..
15.	Do you like to negotiate a marriage for your daughter with a suitable Pana/Ganda groom?	..	1:08	1:25	1:07	1:12	1:72	3:48	1:12	1:30
		..	1:25	1:37	1:33	1:15	1:40	2:03	..	..
		..	1:12	1:25	1:07	1:62	4:73	3:52	1:12	1:45

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
16.	Would you have objections ? If there is a love marriage between.	..	2:77	2:35	2:95	2:53	2:32	2:90	...	..
16.1.	Your son and a Pana/ Gand girl,	..	1:44	1:67	1:23	1:82	2:12	4:33	1:32	1:87
16.2.	Your daughter and a Pana/ Ganda boy.	...	3:02	2:75	3:10	2:53	2:30	3:07	..	..
16.3.	Your brother and a Pana/ Ganda girl.	..	1:47	1:67	1:23	1:82	2:15	4:34	1:37	1:92
16.4.	Your sister and a Pana/ Ganda boy.	..	3:02	2:75	3:22	2:95	2:58	3:03	..	..
		..	1:52	1:72	1:28	1:91	2:18	4:30	1:42	2:17
		..	3:12	2:90	3:50	2:95	2:65	3:03	..	..
		..	1:52	1:72	1:25	1:91	2:18	4:30	1:45	2:17
17.	Would you like to have services from Pana/Ganda ?	..	3:90	3:55	3:46	1:75	2:25	1:12	...	..
17.1.	Rituals	..	3:76	2:10	2:92	1:83	1:11	1:00	1:10	1:00
17.2.	Domestic chores	..	1:10	1:33	1:22	1:03	1:05	1:00	..	..
17.3.	Agricultural work	..	1:05	1:07	1:00	1:00	1:00	1:00	1:00	1:00
		..	3:97	4:95	4:78	4:05	3:84	3:15	..	..
		..	4:26	4:47	4:53	4:74	4:14	3:27	4:25	4:42
18.	Would you like to serve Pana/Ganda, if required ?	..	1:20	1:90	1:56	1:55	1:25	3:10	..	..
18.1.	Rituals	..	1:10	1:40	1:00	1:16	2:03	4:07	1:22	1:60
18.2.	Domestic chores	..	1:15	1:80	1:03	1:37	1:25	3:00	..	..
18.3.	Agricultural work	..	1:17	1:25	1:00	1:06	2:11	4:28	1:12	1:55
		..	1:20	1:77	1:47	1:80	1:55	4:20	..	..
		..	1:20	2:15	1:30	3:04	2:17	4:56	2:65	4:52

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
19.	Do you think that Pana/Ganda are more dirty and unclean than you are ?	..	1:87	2:25	2:02	2:37	2:05	4:20	..	..
19:1.	In dress :	..	2:26	2:40	2:92	2:85	3:62	4:37	3:10	3:02
19:2.	Personal hygiene :	..	1:95	2:37	2:84	2:53	2:32	4:03	..	..
		..	2:57	2:45	2:96	3:16	4:02	4:42	3:07	3:12
20.	Do you feel that Pana/Ganda are eschewing unclean practices ?	..	2:85	3:35	3:04	3:47	3:98	4:15	..	..
		..	3:04	3:77	3:77	3:92	3:94	4:27	3:27	3:62
21.	Do Pana/Ganda emulate modern way of living ?	..	4:15	4:70	4:18	4:60	4:62	4:57	..	..
		..	4:10	4:20	4:00	4:23	4:56	4:83	3:90	4:05
22.	Are Pana/Ganda following your way of life ? (refind dialect, name, sur-name, dress, food, and rituals)	..	3:47	4:62	1:29	2:50	2:10	2:45	..	..
		..	3:97	4:65	1:53	2:81	1:16	1:58	2:60	2:00
23.	Do Pana/Ganda imitate the customs of higher castes ? (Brahman, Khand a y a t/ Brahaman, Agaria and Hinduized Bhuinya)	..	3:95	4:35	3:71	3:57	4:32	4:10	..	..
		..	3:97	4:77	4:46	3:73	4:20	3:66	4:35	4:82
24.	Do Pana/Ganda harbour malice against caste Hindus ?	..	3:90	3:85	3:67	4:00	3:65	3:60	..	..
		..	3:89	2:12	3:15	3:46	3:05	3:29	4:10	3:85
25.	Do Pana/Ganda deserve Government help for their uplift ?	..	3:93	4:00	3:84	4:65	4:70	4:60	..	..
		..	3:28	3:40	3:84	2:74	4:86	4:88	3:65	4:27
		..								4:40

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
26.	Do you know that there are protective measures for Pana/Ganda ?	..	4.50	4.55	3.72	..	..	..	..	..
		CTC	..	4.55	3.72	..	..	..	..	..
		SNG	4.37	4.37	3.61	..	..	3.70	3.35	3.40
27.	Do Pana/Ganda have some honourable status as yours in the society ?	..	1.95	1.87	1.75	2.33	2.10	2.72	..	..
		CTC	..	1.87	1.75	2.33	2.10	2.72	..	..
		SNG	1.60	1.82	1.92	1.97	1.97	3.81	1.75	1.72
28.	Are you (Harijan communities) aware of the constitutional safeguards and protective measures meant for your welfare ?	..	..	..	..	4.23	4.12	4.10	4.15 (Pana)	..
		CTC	..	..	..	4.23	4.12	4.10	4.15 (Pana)	..
		SNG	..	..	..	4.00	4.02	3.30	4.05 (Ganda)	..

\* CTC=Cuttack district

\*\* SNG=Sundargarh district

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## TRIBAL CUSTOMARY MARRIAGE AMONG SELECTED TRIBES OF ORISSA

SRIKANTA MISHRA

The socio-economic development of the tribes of the State of Orissa appears to be very low Orissan tribal society and culture form an essential part of the mainstream of our motherland, thoughts predominantly indigenous features provide a distinct identity in the socio-cultural map of India. Usually identified with the geographical area watered by the major rivers, the Suvarnarekha, Budhabalang, Vaitarani Brahmani, Mahanadi and Rishikulya, tribal Orissa maintained her separate socio-cultural entity since the days of the *Mahabharata*.

In any civilised and progressive society, marriage is an institution of great importance. It is the centre of a family which in turn is a significant unit of the social structure. Thus marriage is very significant social institution of any society. It lays down the nucleus of society. In all the social system, it as an institution which constituted the cementing force in the society. Furthermore, this social institution is the best gift conferred upon society by social engineers. Its utility to bring about a settled life in organised society cannot be gainsaid.

Turning to the topic as captioned above in this article the present writer proposes to highlight some of the tribal customary marriages which is confined only to tribes like *Ho, Kharia, Mirdhas, Plan Oraon* of the State.

### A. HO

In the Mayurbhanj district of Orissa generally HO is one of the important tribes. Here adult marriage is the rule. The quantity of bride-price consisting of many heads of cattle is a significant feature for the grooms.

A *dutam karji* or marriage broker is selected from among the tribe who carries on the negotiation. Visits are exchanged by either party. Here *Ganan* or bride-price is the pivotal factor in a marriage. The demands of bride price is formidably prohibitive these days.

On the date of marriage, the bride is escorted to the bridegroom's house by the female friends amidst much singing and dancing. Her father, family friends and relatives arrange a procession. They are received half way. The bride and the groom are then seated on new low wooden *pidha* (seat) at a place previously cleaned, swept and plastered with cowdung and earth and decorated with mango leaves woven into chains.

There is not much of a ritual. The bridegroom pledges the bride pouring some of the *handia* (liquor) from his cup of *sal* leaves into her. The compliment is returned. The groom then applies vermilion on the forehead of the bride. This completes marriage.

Lastly, a grand feast with *handia* and *mahua* wine follows. The bride is then received inside the house first by her mother-in law.

### B. Kharia

In Talsara area of Sundargarh district of Orissa Kharia tribe is found. Among them after tentative selection of a bride the astrologer is consulted as to the suitability of the match-health and other relevant considerations are taken into account.

The main thrust of the burden of marriage falls on an outsider, named *siana* who not only officiates in marriage but takes charge of the

elaborate rituals. The father of the bridegroom entrusts to him all the articles, clothes, dresses and other items required for the marriage.

Here the payment of bride-price is symbolic of the claim of the bride groom over the bride.

On the day preceding the marriage two of the castemen from the bridegroom's side are deputed to fetch the bride. Marriages are solemnised usually in the day time. The bride is accompanied with a host of friends and relatives including a number of her girl friends.

The *Siana* attends to all the elaborate rituals of marriage. The girls fetch water and bathe the bride. The bridegroom is given a bath by the boys of the village. Both the bride and bridegroom wear new clothes and sit down on the marriage *bedi* (altar.) A new piece of cloth covers both the heads. The *siana* anoints oil over their heads and combs their hair seven times. He then smears vermilion on their heads and unites the right hands of both. This perhaps is the binding part of marriage, and while this is done, the boys and girls attending the marriage dance wildly with the accompaniment of music on *Madala*.

After union of the hands both the partners are taken to a separate spot where a slab of stone is kept. Both are made to stand on the stone. Behind the bride stands the bridegroom.

The *siana* takes a pitcherful of water and with a few mango leaves sprinkles the water on their heads. Then both the partners return to the marriage platform again and sit side by side. The brother-in-law of the bridegroom delivers him a fist for which he is presented with a cloth. All the presents brought by the bride are exhibited at this point. The bride and the bridegroom live as husband and wife from the next day.

Among the Khaira child marriage is rare, Marriage of widows and divorcees are admissible. Cases of divorce are discussed and decided upon by the caste panchayat and in case the woman is found at fault, the man to remarry her has to pay the cost of marriage to the first husband as compensation.

### C. Mirdhas

The term Mirdha means head carrier. It is a small Dravidian tribe which is found in the districts of Sambalpur and Balangir. The above

tribe is divided into a number of exogamous sects, called clan. Adult marriage is the usual practice. Marriage of widows and divorced women is allowed. Again marriage with the daughter of ones' maternal uncle is possible.

Generally most marriages are finalised through mediators. The parents of the boy usually take the initiative in a marriage settled through negotiation. They choose a negotiator whom they call *Kanihara* and depend on him for finalisation of all details of marriage till the marriage is solemnised. The month of *Magha* is the most suitable month for marriage and the days considered auspicious are Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

On the preceding day of marriage, two elderly women of the bridegroom's party visit the house of the bride in order to fetch her to the house of the boy on the date of marriage. The women trek the distance and no formal drum beating is done.

Marriage rituals are celebrated on a raised platform under a shed specially constructed for the purpose. The parents of the boy usually hand over the entire responsibility of marriage to an elderly and experienced man of the tribe who is vested with full authority to operate on behalf of the parents of the boy.

The marriage is followed by dance, feast and drink. Meat and *Kusuno* (liquor,) must be served on the occasion.

Among the Mirdhas the *udulia* form of marriage (when the boy and girl fall in love and decide to marry) is prevalent but *Jhinka* form involving marriage by capture is reported as rare. A tribal feast follows the *udulia* form of marriage. Here marriage within the same clan is prohibited. Separation from the family of orientation does not take place immediately after marriage of adult sons.

### D. Oraon

In the Sundargarh district of Orissa specially in the areas of Bonai and Gangpur *Oraon* tribe is found. Among them adult marriage is the rule. The difference of age between the husband and wife is often very small and in widow and divorce marriages, the gap is lower sometimes yielding place to women being senior in age to men.

Before the commencement of a negotiation for marriage, their traditional priest is consulted. The tribesmen sit together and propose a particular bride.

The custom of bride-price is prevalent here and a few bottles of liquor are to be served to the bride's party. After this is given the date for betrothal is fixed up for which Monday and Wednesday are considered ominently auspicious. On the date of betrothal, the party from the bride's house visit the house of the bridegroom with eight pieces of clothes, some bottles of liquor, etc. They are, however, fed sumptuously three to four times by the bridegroom's side which is indeed an expensive proposition for the latter.

Marriage functions continue for four days. All relatives of the bridegroom arrive on the first day for preparing the altar and the shed. They sing and dance merrily.

The home and village deities are worshipped with fowls and liquor. The marriage procession which includes the bridegroom and members of

either sex proceeds for the bride's village. Another procession from the bride's side with the bride's parents receive them near the latter's village. Marriage is solemnised on the altar after which the groom participates in the songs and dances. On the third day they return to the groom's house. On the fourth day, the couple go together to have a ceremonial bath where the bridegroom pours a vessel of water on the head of the bride. Honeymoon is observed on this night. In case of widow-remarriage or marriage after divorce, the above formalities are not elaborately observed.

### E. Conclusion

To conclude this article some tribes of Orissa although were peasantised in course of historical process but most of them retained their customary rituals concerning marriage. The tribals seem to have achieved a freedom in the social intercourse of young people which tends to disappear in orthodox Hindu society. Therefore, the tribal communities of Orissa do not take marriage as a sacrament. Divorce and widow remarriage are common among them.

so as to provide opportunities for their employment; provision has also been made to provide free education to their children upto University level.

TABLE 1

List of legislations for Scheduled Castes in the Constitution of India\*

Article	Provisions
15	Prohibition of discrimination
16	Equality of opportunity
17	Abolition of untouchability
23	Abolition of forced labour
46	Special care for weaker sections of people
330, 332	Representation in Parliament
335	Reservations in Public Services

\*Source—Report of Commission to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe, 1980-81. (3rd Report)

In spite of all these legislations and attempts the socio-economic condition of these socially down trodden people has not yet come upto the standard, as expected. In this context an attempt was made by the authors to have a study with the objective to find out the real socio-economic problems of the Scheduled Caste people in a rural setting and their level of aspirations regarding various fields.

#### METHODOLOGY

This sociological study was carried out in four Scheduled Caste populated villages of Puri district of Orissa. All the four study villages are situated within 20 Kms. distance from the State Capital, Bhubaneswar. The purpose behind choosing the villages near Bhubaneswar was to know the plight and problems of the respondents who are residing in the close proximity of the State capital. Firstly, a list of the predominantly Scheduled Caste populated villages in the vicinity of Bhubaneswar was made. Out of the list four villages were selected by random sampling basis to avoid bias. A total of one hundred families were interviewed

individually by means of a structured schedule. The spokesman of each family was interviewed by the authors and the result so obtained was analysed by means of simple statistical methods and interpreted.

#### RESULT-DISCUSSION

##### Social Participation and Cosmopolitaness

Social participation of an individual signifies his/her degree of participation in various social, cultural and political organisations, while cosmopolitaness determines the outward orientation outside the locality. Both the terms have got immense importance for any individuals, progress and development of the society as a whole. It was found out that the respondents had got very low degree of social participation and they were mostly localite in nature. Only 20 per cent of them were found to have participation in village youth clubs, recreation centres and panchayat samities to some extent. Similarly they did not have any opportunity to keep contact with outside world. This is because of their poverty and struggle for livelihood. In this process they hardly got any time to meet people from outside their locality and to make social contact. Only a few of them had twice or thrice visited the nearby Block office, Bank or Co-operative societies regarding the loan matters and similar allied activities. This low degree of exposure, due to less outsidess contact and low social participation had a great impact on their meagre socio-economic conditions. This confirms the findings of Santharam *et al* (1984).

##### Education

Education is the sole factor to climb the ladder of development. An educated man will definitely understand his rights, privileges and problems and follow recommendations in an effective manner. It was found out that a large majority of Scheduled Caste literates were without any formal education and there was a sharp decline in number of students who have completed the primary education. There was, of course, a considerable progress in the literacy rates in urban areas, but the literacy rate in case of Scheduled Caste people in rural areas was still very low, particularly among females. Because of poverty and family preasure to earn something for their survival they did not have enough opprotunity to attend schools. Although Government was giving free dress,

problem in case of Scheduled Castes had been particularly acute on account of their poor financial position and prevailing social prejudices. At times the persons belonging to these communities were reduced to the position of virtual serfs. their huts happened to be constructed on the fields of their employer and they had to submit to dictates of feudal elements. The same was also observed by the authors. The Harijan families lived in one or two roomed mud, thatched huts which were shared by both men and domestic animals. The women folk usually wore cheap sarees and children up to age of six or seven remained almost naked. The signs of bloodlessness was very prominent in the health of the people, particularly among the women and children.

According to the standard fixed by the National Government (7th Plan) any family in rural areas having average annual family income below Rs. 6,400 was considered to be below the poverty line. As per the standard 64 per cent of the studied families were below poverty line struggling very hard to come out of the clutches of the poverty. What comes their way was not the legal or ritual sanctions but the absence of purchasing power.

The authors made an attempt by inviting suggestions and opinions of the Harijan families regarding the eradication of the said problems and shortcomings which came in their path of development. Those statements were enlisted below :—

1. Efforts should be made by the Government to increase their income by providing them more days of employment, land for cultivation and financial assistance for business and animal husbandry.
2. They had blamed some Government officials and village touts for the exploitation while getting a loan or financial assistance through I.R.D.P., or E.R.R.P.
3. The prevailing wage rate was found to be one of the major problems and enhancement at any cost is very much necessary keeping in view the rapid rise in prices of essential commodities.
4. Most of the respondents had suggested that meetings should be held in the respective villages before granting

financial assistance to identify the real needy persons and to avoid wrong identification of beneficiaries. The same type of observation was also made before by Sahoo and Mandal (198.).

#### Level of aspiration of the respondents

It has been established by Sociologists that people should be helped according to their aspirations so as to help them to improve their socio-economic condition. It is no good to impose something without consulting the programme participants. It has been widely criticised by many authors about implanted approach of development which does not arouse interest of the people. The Planning Commission has also recommended that aspiration model is probably the most effective one for the weaker sections of the society to push them above poverty line. Considering all these, an attempt was made by the authors to find out the aspiration (Social, Political, Ethnical), of the respondents.

#### Social Aspiration

The study revealed that 60 per cent of the respondents wanted to be at par with caste Hindus and enjoy all facilities and privileges like that of the upper caste people. But 28 per cent of the respondents had supported untouchability on the plea that in the name of untouchability they were able to enjoy special privileges from Government i. e. subsidy, loan and jobs, etc. But inspite of encouragement given by the Government most of them except some young people considered the inter caste marriage as a special taboo. It was observed that majority of the respondents did not see any danger to their social security but some had a feeling that there might be some trouble in future as it was happening in other parts of the country. It is a fact that there exists a vast communication gap between the administration and the common people. The respondents being mostly illiterate were unable to read the printed materials. So, naturally they wanted more information from Government officials and Voluntary Organisations regarding their various problems particularly regarding the legal matters. Similarly, most of the respondents had favourable aspiration for family planning and education for their children. But it was observed that the dropout in the village schools was a common phenomena which was increasing year after year. The probable cause might be the excess

pressure exerted by the illiterate wage earning parents on their children to follow the same parental occupation. So far as participation in village policy decision was concerned, majority of the respondents were not interested because of the fact that Scheduled Caste people in general were poor and they were mostly engaged as wage earners to earn their living. As such they did not have time to devote for such activities. Further, it was observed that almost all of the respondents were dissatisfied with their present level and way of income. This is definitely an encouraging trend. This clearly shows that, given proper guidance, training and technology, they will definitely work to increase their level of income.

### Political aspiration

In a democratic country like ours, it is very much essential on the part of every citizen to know very well the civic duties to be performed towards the Nation and the procedural details for selecting a people's representative. It was interesting to observe that all the respondents had exercised their franchise at least once in their life although most of them had no much idea about the election procedure. It was also observed that a majority of the respondents did not want any change in the present election system. However very few of them had expressed their desire to participate in active politics, i. e., to be a political leader or Sarpanch, etc. Others found no time and interest to take part in active politics. It was obvious that these predominantly wage earning people were so busy for earning their bread that they practically got no time to spare for thinking such things.

### Ethical aspiration

Regarding the ethical aspect it was interesting to observe that majority of the respondents did not support caste occupation. Because it was less remunerative and regarded as less prestigious. But it was the factor called social responsibility which had compelled some people to continue with their traditional caste occupation. Further, it was also observed that nearly half of the respondents had expressed desire to offer 'Puja' in village temple if they were allowed to do so. But others apprehended that it may lead to a caste conflict.

Increased emphasis must be made to spread education among the Scheduled Caste people. Special efforts should be made by voluntary agencies, social workers and Government officials to carry out adult education programmes. As most of the Harijans are either landless or have very little land emphasis must be given to provide them facilities to take up non-farming occupations like, trading, dairy farming, etc. The enhancement of wage rate should be considered sympathetically. Lack of communication and guidance is the major constraint standing as barrier against their development. So, communication gap between the weaker sections and the Government officials, planners should be minimised as far as possible.

### Application of the Study

The authors sincerely hope that this study will certainly help the planners to formulate plans and programmes basing on the real problems of the Scheduled Caste people. Secondly, the study can provide vital tips regarding their aspiration level to know about their actual needs.

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