

## Dynamics of tribal migration in undivided Koraput district of Odisha, India

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### Abstract

An anthropological perspective, indebtedness is a major factor of tribal migration. Tribes are being alienated from their land and forest due to massive investment in construction of dams, power plants, industrialization and mining create the wealth to the nation and employment opportunities to various people. The natural resources are being exploited in a way, which leads to a process of gradual displacement and denying the basic right of livelihood to the tribes. But all this is hardly of any benefit to the tribes rather it leads to their social and cultural deprivation, land alienation, destruction of the environment and displacements, which is often without any rehabilitation. Therefore, A large number of tribal population from the undivided Koraput district of Odisha migrate to neighboring states for searching some gainful employment for their livelihood.

**Keywords:** tribal, anthropological, cultural, land alienation

### Introduction

Historically speaking the migration process was not new for the tribes of Odisha. They were initiated into this process through the shifting cultivation that was a part of their traditional economy. The word migration is derived from the Latin word *migrate*; meaning to change one's residence. It is difficult to define the concept 'migration' precisely, since it encompasses many aspects. Migration from one area to another in search of improved livelihoods is a key feature of human history. However, migration in the nineteenth century the tribals were forced out of their home land by the colonial policy. tribal labour was encouraged to join plantations, mines and to some extent factories, as it was cheap and committed. Migration was the result of the double edge colonial policy of land alienation and labour recruitment (Singh and Jha, 2004) <sup>[1]</sup>. Indebtedness, Inadequate food security Lack of local work, low wages or late payment of wages is a major factor of tribal out migration. Tribes are being alienated from their land and forest due to Massive investment in construction of dams, power plants, industrialization and mining create the wealth to the nation and employment opportunities to various people. The natural resources are being exploited in a way, which leads to a process of gradual displacement and denying the basic right of livelihood to the tribes. But all this is hardly of any benefit to the tribes rather it leads to their social and cultural deprivation, land alienation, destruction of the environment and displacements, which is often without any rehabilitation. Therefore, A large number of tribal population from Koraput district of Odisha migrate to neighboring states for searching some gainful employment for their livelihood. The southern part of Odisha like Undivided Koraput district are depend on monsoon rain for agriculture. Except the three months of monsoon the area is mostly rain-fed the people are unable to cultivate their land, during seasons when local work is unavailable. Therefore, they have very limited sources of income without alternate sources of local

employment the poor tribal people are left with two options: migrate or starve (SPREAD, 2009) <sup>[3]</sup>. Factors behind distressed periodic migration can be classified under two broad categories: push and pull factors. The push factors include lack of income and employment, displacement, natural calamities, indebtedness, and loss of agriculture at the native places. The majority of tribal people in Odisha basically migrates because of push factors and Pull factors include availability of high income opportunities, better facilities and the urge to see new places (GOI, 2010).

### Tribes of India, Odisha

The Indian Constitution identifies for special consideration certain ethnic minority groups, traditionally referred to as tribes or tribal, as Scheduled Tribes (STs) who constitute around 8.14 percent of the total population of the country. After Africa, India is the second country to host a large number of diverse tribal communities. There are 705 tribes living in different parts of the country. Each community has its own cultural and economic differentiation besides specific ethnic identities. One of the distinguishing features of STs is that the majority of them live in scattered habitations located in the interior, remote, and inaccessible hilly and forest areas of the country. As a result of inhabiting the interior, remote and inaccessible hilly area of the country, many of them are socio-economically and educationally backward as compared to other communities of the country. As per the census 2011, the tribal population of Odisha is 9.22 percent out of the total population of state. Odisha is one of the tribal dominated states in India, which inhabits 62 types of tribal groups, including 13 Particular Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) (GOI, SPSTI, 2013). Out of the 62 tribal groups in Odisha, 22 tribal groups, including seven Particular Vulnerable Tribal groups (PVTGs), live in undivided Koraput district. Mayurbhanj, with 58 percent of the total population of that district, has the highest tribal

population in Odisha. Undivided Koraput district has 54 percent tribal population out of the total population of that district, which is the second highest in Odisha (Census, 2011) <sup>[4]</sup>. Population wise *Kondh* tribe is the dominant tribe in Odisha with *Soura* and *Paroja* being the second and the third ones, respectively. In descending order (population-wise), the major districts, where the *Kondh* tribe is inhabited, are Mayurbhanj, Raygada, Kandhamal, Phulbani, Koraput, etc.

### Area of the Study

After 1992, undivided Koraput district was bifurcated into four separate districts namely; 1. Koraput district (with 51 percent tribal population), 2. Nabarangapur (55.79 percent), 3. Malkangiri (57 percent) and 4. Raygada, with a 56 percent tribal population out of the total population living in that district (Census, 2011) <sup>[4]</sup>. Various tribal groups dominate all four districts. Koraput district is dominated by *Paroja* tribe, Nabarangapur district by *Bhatra* tribe, Malkangiri district by *Paroja* tribe and Raygada district is dominated by *Kondh* tribe. Malkangiri district has the highest population of STs (57.4 percent) followed by Mayurbhanj (56.6 percent) and Raygada (55.8 percent) of the state. Among the various tribal groups of district, *Kondh* and *Paroja* population is higher in comparison to other tribal group population in the district. Therefore, the Koraput and Raygada district is concerned for the present study as *Paroja* and *Kondh* tribal population is higher among all tribal groups and this group is taken into account for study purpose.

### Methodology

This study has been conducted based on the multi stage random and purposive sampling, and data collection through the extensive and intensive field work has been undertaken to make an indepth study of the socioeconomic conditions with special reference to the nature and type of migration. Both primary and secondary data were used for this present study. For the primary information were collected from, who is migrate for work through the qualitative surveys were data carried out and the secondary information collected from the census, state and district statistical information office.

### Issues and challenges of the study

It has been observed that a large number of tribal people from the undivided Koraput district of Odisha, migrate to different parts of the country for searching some gainful employment/casual labour in the unorganized sector and as household maids for their livelihood. Generally the tribal migrants have found jobs in factories, agro-processing plants or working as porters, domestic servants, bus cleaners, rickshaw pullers, street hawkers, petty traders, wage laborer and domestic workers, etc. Another new feature of tribal migration from these districts in recent years has been the large scale migration of single-women to cities in search of livelihood, which is a subtle change from the earlier migration patterns when only the men migrated to urban centres (Jha, 2005) <sup>[2]</sup>. Which is a subtle change from the earlier migration patterns when only the men migrated to urban center. The

tribal families now a days are driven by poverty to send unmarried daughters to cities in search of work with the village people. As a result, the tribal girls are however, prone to exploited physically and sexual abuse not only by employers but also by anti social elements. Some time male also mentally and physically tortured by the contractor and middleman. According to people what he faces at the work site, the contractor does not give right time wage, overtime work and get less amount, no sufficient food, drinking water and shelter.

If anybody raises voice agent it, then he/she going to be punished, therefore people are bound to work at migrate place without any interest. Generally the tribal people migrate to a different place to take his/her school going children for few months. Therefore, the tribal children are less interested to study and more interested to work as a child laborer at the contractual side. Some time only male person going to work outside of the locality as a laborer. Due to the irregularity of wage payment at the workplace, they are unable to return home, at that time their family member face lots of problems.

### The proposed of the study

The present study focuses on, the reasons for tribal out migration and to document how and where they migrate, their living conditions prior to migration. To highlight, their child's schooling and health status after migration, the impact of the migration on their socio-economic life pattern at individual and community level. To understand the regional and seasonal variation, different types and forms of migration like inter-state cross migration, circular migration, occupational migration, short term migration, long-term migration, migration caused by displacement and gender migration among the tribes undivided Koraput district of Odisha. And finally to understand the tribal people whether they know the development programmes being implemented for their benefit or not.

### Development programme and tribal migration

Due to their backwardness, low socio-economic conditions, poverty, unemployment, displacement, indebtedness, lack of opportunities, accessibility and awareness the government has made affirmative policies, Programmes and enacted laws. There are many Constitutional safeguards for the welfare, development and protection of Scheduled Tribes in the country. During the 5<sup>th</sup> Scheduled in the Scheduled Areas, "The Forest Rights Bill", "Land Rehabilitation & Resettlement Policy", has taken to implement though the Constitutional provisions. The State is a great impediment for the welfare and development of the tribal population in the country. The government has implemented a different programme like, national Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA), Jawahar Rojgar Yojana (JRY), Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS), Food for Work Programme (FFW), Prime Minister Gramin Swarojgar Yojana (PMGSY), Swarna Jayanti Gramin Swarojgar Yojana (SGSY) ec, for maintain of their livelihood. Other hands coupled to this, the government and private industrial establishments have initiated mega projects of mining, hydro-electric, industry, business, roads and

transport which is leading to the loss of traditional land ownership and livelihood opportunities. This is resulting in large scale migration of rural tribal to urban areas and migrate to neighboring state for search of livelihoods either temporarily or on permanent basis. Human Migration and in particular tribal migration with its implications is becoming an important socio-economic problem for the policy makers and government to undertake welfare and development activities.

The anthropologist raising always questions in this context of 'what is Development'? For whom? In malice of socio-economic development within any state problems such as poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, superstition, ill health, hunger, sickness and lassitude remain as they were then; in that case development becomes quite meaningless. What is required is the adoption of a humanistic and holistic approach towards the entire issue of development. Development can be termed as meaningful and successful only when it has a visibly positive impact on concrete human situations. Therefore, the development should be such that it fulfills the basic human needs in such a way that there is an increase in the satisfaction level of the members of any society. But in the Koraput district of Odisha, the tribals are being alienated from their land and forest due to the ongoing hydro-electric power generation, construction of dams, industrial growth and mining activities, which leads to a process of gradual displacement and denying the basic right of livelihood to the tribal population. The basic human needs should comprise of sufficient food, clothes, shelter, health services, educational opportunities, leisure or rest and expectedly decent working conditions. In short, it means an adequate standard of living. As per the rule of law, Gram Sabhas and Poli Sabha are the prime institutions for planning at the Panchayat and village level. But after ethnographical investigation fact is the Gram Sabhas or Poli Sabhas are not held in their true sense anywhere in the tribal area of the undivided Koraput district of Odisha. Under the Poli and Gram Sabha the "People's Plan" should be integrated and formulated a specific scheme. Each problem of the villages should be discussed and plans should be prepared accordingly. For the purpose of planning, the gram Panchayats can use the help of experienced organizations and institutions for tribal development.

### Conclusion

Above the study, we conclude that the tribal Migration from undivided of Koraput district has been shown to be the result of embarrassment conditions. This condition is created of many reasons for migration like low agricultural productivity, deforestation, displacement, landlessness and unavailability of government work opportunities in the local area. As a result, the tribal people are however, prone to exploited physically and sexual abuse not only by employers but also by anti social elements. Some time the migrates people also mentally and physically tortured by the contractor and middleman. According to people what he faces at the work site, the contractor does not give right time wage, overtime work and get less amount, no sufficient food, drinking water and shelter. The circular migration, or

rural-urban migration, and distress migration are emerging as a dominant form of migration amongst the tribal people in the Undivided Koraput district of Odisha. The mobility factor of tribal families the main cause of higher school dropout among the tribes of Odisha.

### Suggestion

Unemployment, poverty and lack of basic facilities of education, health and hygiene are still a major problem in the tribal areas forcing them for out migration to various towns and cities. Therefore, following suggestions had emerged from this study, which needs immediate attention to improve the system.

The government policies is required to tackle the problem of circular and distress migration.

1. The government need to immediate attention awareness of rights to work and needs to be increased work and wage rate under the MGNREGA schemes in local areas.
2. The PDS system and other food security schemes need better supervision and protections from corruption in tribal area.
3. Need to increase irrigation facility to the tribal cultivated land long term solution.
4. Ensuring the Forest Rights Act should be fully implemented and alternative livelihood options should be promoted in native village.
5. Agents contractors and middlemen should all be registered in order to hold them accountable for false promises and fair payment of wages, as well as all the other provisions of the Interstate Migrant Workmen Act for which they are responsible.
6. Social security provisions should be made mandatory for the migrant laborers provided by the employer or the contractor.
7. All migrants should be covered either by life or health insurance during their migration period, provided by the employer/contractor.

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