

LIVES AND LIVELIHOOD OF TRIBALS IN NAXALITE AFFECTED VILLAGES: A STUDY IN SUNDARGARH DISTRICT OF ODISHA

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ABSTRACT

The live and livelihood condition of the tribal people living in the Naxalite prone villages are more deplorable as compared to the national and state averages of the tribal people in India and Odisha. Nearly 90 percent of them are living below the poverty line and their quality of living i.e. housing, access to sanitation and safe drinking water, basic and tertiary education and health care delivery system are in a gloomy state. They eke out their livelihood by performing multiple activities, such as agriculture, casual labor, hunting, forest food gathering, tribal art and craft work, etc. A single activity is insufficient to provide survivable sustainable livelihood for them. A colossal percentage of them are the marginal land owner and land holding is insufficient to provide sustainable livelihood. They are still in the primitive stage of development and faraway from the modernity. The deplorable socio-economic conditions and apathy of state apparatus has created discontent among the tribals' and the Naxalite problem is an upshot of socio-economic problems and governance deficit of state apparatus. Because of non existence of market and state activities the 'development' is completely ramshackle in these tribal villages and it has provided a platform to the naxalite to operate their nefarious activities in these villages detached from the mainstream.

Keywords: Naxalism, tribals', lives and livelihood, quality of living, health

INTRODUCTION

There are an estimated 370 million indigenous people living in more than 70 countries worldwide (WHO, 2007). They are the custodians of some of the most biologically diverse territories in the world and are responsible for a great deal of the world's linguistic and cultural diversity and their traditional knowledge has been and continues to benefit all of mankind (UN, 2009). Despite their rich diversity of cultures, religions, traditions, languages and histories, they continue to be among the world's most marginalized population groups (WHO, 2007). United Nations has recognized the indigenous people call for the increased respect for indigenous culture, spirituality, lifestyles, and sustainable development models, including traditional systems of land tenure, gender relations, and use of resources (UNPF, 1994-2009). Even today, a widely pervasive reality in respect of tribal communities in India is that most of them are socially ignorant, economically weak, geographically isolated, politically indifferent, culturally rich, behaviorally simple, trustworthy and leading their life in the lap of nature (Rao, 2013). To the ordinary man the word "Tribe" suggests simple folk living in hills and forests, to the people who are a little better informed, it signifies colorful folk, famous for their dance and song; to an administrator, it means a group of citizens who are the special responsibility of the president of India; to an anthropologist it indicates a special field for study of special phenomenon (GOI, 1961). One of the main challenges that Indian government is facing after independence is the provision of improvement of their socio-economic status (Kokate and Sounke, 2011). Owing to this, the socio-economic and

political situations of indigenous people have become one of the most researched topics among the sociologists and anthropologists in recent times (Hossai, 2013). At the national, regional and international levels, the perspectives of indigenous people have gained increasing recognition, inter alia, as reflected in the presence of the Working Group on Indigenous populations at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the proclamation by the General Assembly of the Year 1993 as the International Year of the World's Indigenous People (UNFPA, 1994-2009).

It is important to reveals that half of the indigenous tribal people of the world i.e. 84, 3326,240 are living in India (Census Report, 2001). The tribal constitute 8.2 percent of total population in India. There are about 635 tribal groups and subgroups including 75 primitive communities (Census Report, 2001). The Scheduled Tribes are the segregated and isolated communities and are concentrated in the states of Odisha, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan where, they constitute about 80 percent of the Scheduled Tribe population of India (Rao, 2013). As far as Odisha is concerned, Scheduled Tribes constitute 22.13 percent of Odisha's population. There are 62 different Scheduled Tribes, out of which 13 types are of primitive category (Odisha Human Development Report, 2001). The tribal populations are largely concentrated in six districts of Odisha i.e. Koraput, Malkangiri, Rayagada, Kondhomal, Sundargarh and Mayurbhanj (Odisha Human Development Report, 2001). One of the studies revealed that, Scheduled Tribes, which constitute twenty two percent of Odisha's population are the most marginalized and poor social group in the state, with over 72 percent living under the poverty line (Kumar and Chaudhary, 2005). These tribal communities of Odisha have rich social institutions, dwellings, natural habitats, folk dance and music, musical instruments, festival and festive occasions, folk art and in fact a nature-based economy and life skills (Padhi and Panigrahi, 2011).

It is not a flight of fancy, but truly, tribals' are the most socio-economically backward people in India and customarily enjoy a low standard of living and a gigantic percentage of them are residing in rural areas and are also living in forest bereft of modernity. An average tribal person is characterized by: (i) rural residence, (ii) engaged in agriculture and forest related occupation, (iii) poverty, (iv) illiteracy, (v) Ill-health and malnutrition, (vi) accustomed to informal economy and (vii) deeply attached to land and forest (Singh and Jabbi; 1996). According to Joshi (1989) the common features of socio-economic conditions of tribals are: (i) bonded slavery; (ii) land alienation; (iii) money lending; (iv) below subsistence level economy; (v) communication gaps between the laboring people and the government functionaries; (vi) lower level of income; and (vii) receding trends of job opportunities. Dutta (2000) has identified agriculture, business, and service professional, agricultural labor, tenant farming and fishing as the main occupations of the households of the tribal people. An investigation into the socio-economic status of tribals has shown that (i) bamboo straw is the most common roofing material of the tribal people (ii) pond/tank or lake is the major source of water for household work, where as tube wells are the major source of drinking water; and (iii) only one-seventh (14 percent) of households in the study area have electricity (Mullah, Parveen and Abshanullash, 2007).

A large number of tribal communities continue to be extremely backward and some of them are still in the primitive food gathering stage, whereas some others have shaped up a little in terms of economic and educational advancement (Rao, 2013). Undisputedly, indigenous people are considered as the weakest sections of the population in view of common socio-economic and socio-demographic factors like poverty, illiteracy, lack of developmental facilities, lack of adequate primary health facilities, etc. (Thakur et.al. 1991). A livelihood

study of tribals in Jharkhand state has revealed that tribal women perform following activities to eke-out livelihood of their family: (i) food gathering from the forest, (ii) rope making from the bark tree and sabai grass, (iii) honey collection (iv) herbal medicinal plant collection, processing and sale, (v) hunting and trapping, (vi) basket making, (vii) shifting cultivation, (viii) Labor and (ix) fishing (M.S. Malik, et.al). For the last few years, the tribal states like; Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Jharkhand, and West Bengal are vexed with Naxalite problem, which is deeply affecting the development of the tribal areas of these states. The Naxalite conflict has reduced economic growth in the affected states (Collier and Heffler, 2007; Bala Gopal, 2006).

NAXALITES PROBLEM IN COUNTRY SIDE OF INDIA

The largest threat that the Indian government faces today is naxalism, which has infested itself in more than 4 states of the country (Vora and Buxy, 2011). The “Naxalism” is a challenging problem in most of the tribal areas particularly in the state of Odisha, Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and West Bengal. The ‘Naxalites’, are called the ‘Naxals’, is a loose term used to define groups waging a violent struggle on behalf of landless labourers and tribal people against landlords and others. The Naxalites say they are fighting oppression and exploitation to create a classless society. The Research and Analysis Wing of the Indian government of India in 2009, reports that Naxals are spread across 220 districts comprising about 40% of India’s geographical areas (Hart, 2010).

The tension between the police force and naxalite has also created a general climate of insecurity and frustration among the common tribal people in the naxalite prone areas. The development is in jeopardy in these areas. They are deprived of fruits of developmental efforts. People in socio-economically depressed regions often carry a deep sense of frustration and discrimination against their better off neighbors (Xaxa V.,1999). According to Zaman, (2010) “people living in the so-called Red Corridor are perhaps the nicest and most hospitable people in the country. They are just disadvantaged. The state must invest in their poverty alleviation”. IPCS Conference Report (2012), the naxalite movement exploited the under-spread discontent and frustration amongst poor and landless peasants and motivated them to take up arms against higher caste landlords and money lenders. IPCS Conference Report, (2012), on naxal problem has envisaged that “the villagers are not against the state per say, but against corrupt officials, politicians and contractors. It is corruption, which is one of the problems. Unless the state is able to identify and punish people who are stealing money meant for development of these areas, it is not going to be able to deal with the problem”.

THE STUDY

Naxalite activity in Odisha has particularly affected the Koraput, Rayagada, Malkangiri, Gajapati and Ganjam Districts on the Andhra border and Mayurbhanj, Sundargarh, Sambalpur, Deogarh and Keonjhar Districts on the Jharkhand border. Further, the Naxalites are reportedly targeting the Nawarangpur, Jajpur, Kalahandi, Balangir, Phulbani, Bauda and Jharsuguda Districts to expand their operational area (Bala Gopal K., 2006). The continuity of the Naxalite problem has often been explained in terms of the persistence and exacerbation of the ‘basic causes’ that led to its birth – feudal exploitation and oppression of the rural poor, who constitute the majority of the people in Odisha, by the wealthy few (Bala Gopal, 2006). The naxalism and naxalite activities have affected development of the tribals of the affected district. Although they are fighting for the cause of socio-economic backwardness of tribals, their approach has created a sense of fear among the state apparatus and caused insecurity among the common tribals, as a result their activities and action are detrimental to tribal

development and aggravating tribal deprivation. One of the defence experts while commenting on the naxal problem in Odisha said: (i) naxal groups take advantage of the socio-economic problems of the people in less developed areas; (ii) their effort is to prevent development and they have more areas to operate, if there is no development; and (iii) naxalites are unconcerned that their activities will harm the progress of the state and the nation¹. In this study an attempt has been made to assess the lives and livelihood of tribal of a naxalite prone village, which will provided the necessary clue about the tribal development status as a reason for growing naxalism in the area.

The Area, Population, and Sample

The study was conducted in five naxalite villages of Sundargarh district, one of the tribal dominated district's of Odisha. An Oriya Voice has rightly pointed out that Sundargarh and Keonjhar are the poor districts of state, where naxalite movement is going rapid momentum due to the fact, the development of these regions defy all logic of geography and economics². The tribals are spread across all the block and villages of the whole Sundargarh districts. Sundargarh district is having 17 blocks and 262 panchayats and 1720 villages. The tribal population of Sundargarh district constitutes 50.19 percent of total population. Various tribes residing in the district are Kharia, Oraon, Munda, Kissan, Gonds, Bhuiya, Poroja, Lohara etc. The study covered 235 tribal households randomly selected from total 441 tribal households in the villages.

OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

The objectives of the study are;

1. To study the quality of living of tribals with regard to their access to healthy housing, sanitation, drinking water and other essential household amenities.
2. To assess the education and health status of tribals living in these village.
3. To assess the socioeconomic condition of tribals with regard to access to agricultural land, occupation and other livelihood activities.

DISCUSSION

Living Conditions of Tribals

The quality of living of the tribals in these naxalite prone villages is astoundingly low. Nearly 74 percent of population is dwelling in *katcha* houses made of mud, thatch leaves and other low quality materials. During the rainy season, dropping of water from roof, and wept floors become unusable for sitting, sleeping and even usual functioning. These are open houses without doors are just like a manual shade over their heads without adequate protection from rain, heat, cold and even not safe from robbery and crime against women. Sometimes scorpio, snakes and other wild animals enter into the houses. Unhealthy housing causes much morbidity among tribals. If it rains throughout the day, they won't have the single piece of dry floor for sleep at night. Lack of electricity affects usual functioning and more importantly education of the children. Without a bathroom in the house the tribal women also took bath either in the pond or near the tube-well and are in the menace of social shame.

Absolutely, there is no sanitation facility in the houses of tribals, as 100 percent of people still resorting to open defecation, not having even a pit toilet. The glory of total sanitation campaign launched by the government of India under its flagship programme is in a faded state in these tribal villages. As far as, access to safe drinking water is concerned, 78.72 percent of tribals draw drinking water from open-well, its purity is unknown to them. The development is in doom condition and tribals residing in these naxalite villages are absolutely

secluded from modernity and cut-off from glamour and glory of the globalization and are deprived of basic living conditions including healthy housing which is a basic right of an individual.

The great digital divide is glaringly visible, as only two percent of household possess radio sets. None of the tribals have television, because of lack of electricity facilities. Tribals' are cut-off from the globalized digital world. The data reveals that 35.74 percent and 31.06 percent of household manage to acquire a bicycle and bullock-cart respectively as these are instruments for earning a livelihood for them. Bi-cycle helps them to have access to nearby urban agglomeration and access to higher educational institution by a few students of the families having somehow better economic condition, while the better off among the tribals possess bullock-cart using them in transport and agriculture activities.

Table 1. Quality of Living Condition of Tribals

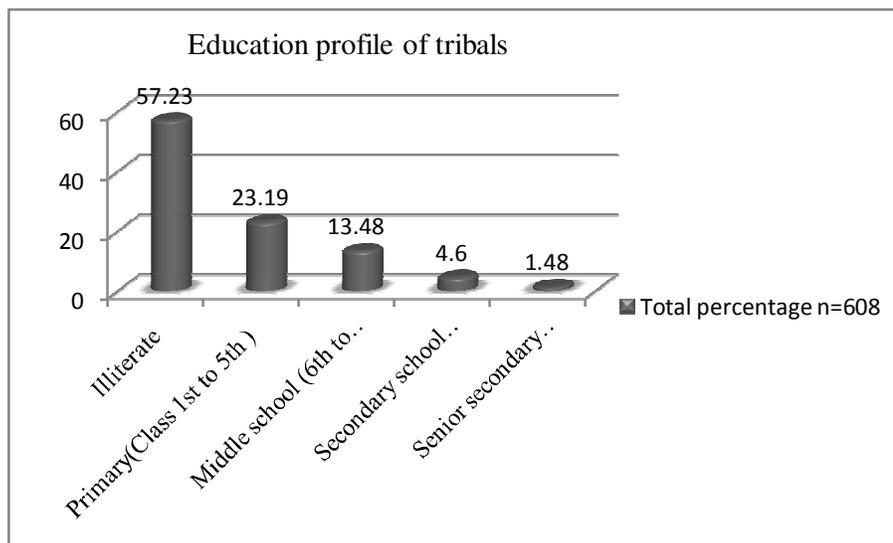
	<i>S.No.</i>		<i>Number (Percentage)</i>
<i>Types of house</i>	1.	Katcha house [Mud-wall and Chhaper]	174 (74.04%)
	2.	Semi pakka house [floor are plaster and roof are made-on Chhaper]	42 (17.87%)
	3.	Pakka house	10 (4.25)
<i>Types of Drinking Water</i>	1.	Open-well	185 (78.72%)
	2.	Hand-pump	50 (21.27%)
<i>Sanitization Facilities</i>	1.	Toilet & bathroom facilities	0
	2.	Open defecation	235 (100%)
<i>Electric Facilities</i>	1.	Yes	0
	2.	No	235 (100%)
<i>Household Assets</i>	1.	Bi-cycle	84 (35.74%)
	2.	Bullock-cart	73 (31.06%)
	3.	Radio	12 (5.10%)
	4.	Not having these all assets	66 (28.08%)

Source: Field Data, *Note: Figures in parenthesis show percentage to total

EDUCATION PROFILE OF THE TRIBALS

Literacy is extremely important for tribals as it will enable to drag them from the darkness of ignorance and blind beliefs and values towards the brightness of a knowledge society. They are backward because they are far away from the knowledge society. Therefore, education in general and tertiary and skill education in particular is key to development of tribals. Without appropriate study and educational environment like electricity, proper clothing, food, study room, books, etc. and accessibility to higher skill education institutions, tertiary education

among tribals in these naxalite prone villages are extremely low and so to in a stage of non-existence.



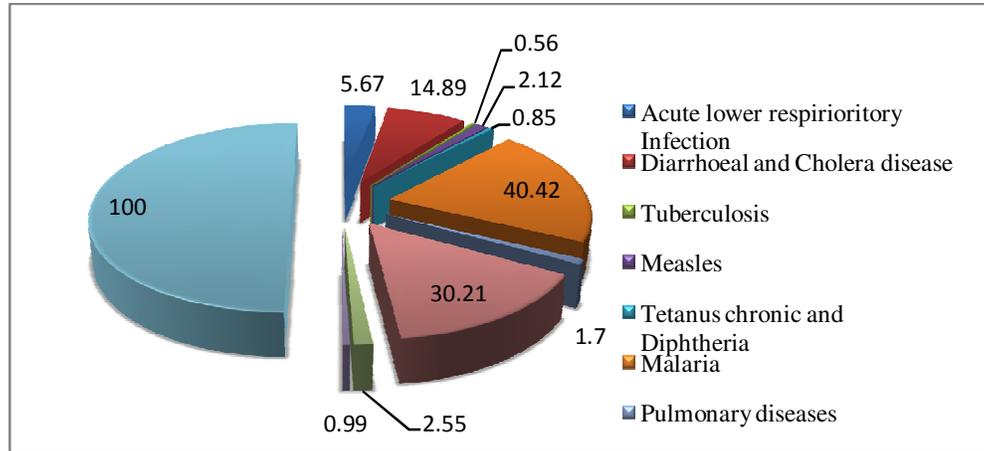
Graph 1. Education Profile of Tribal

Source: Field data, *Note- 5 years and above of age group has adopted.

The study reveal that a colossal of 57.23 of tribals belonging to these naxalite villages are illiterate. The tertiary education almost absent and is meagre one percent of total literacy. These villages do not have a graduate to its credit. The tribal literacy rate of 43 percent in naxalite prone villages are considerably lower compared to national average of 61.6 percent and state average of 76.98 percent. Affordability, availability and accessibility are the main problems of tribal's tertiary education.

HEALTH CONDITIONS OF TRIBALS

As far as health is concerned, it is in a very grim state. Tribals living in these naxalite prone villages, during the survey found suffering from various diseases such as, tuberculosis, faliariasis, malaria, pulmonary diseases, sickle cell diseases, measles, tetanus chronic and diphtheria. These large numbers of diseases are normally not found in other types of villages. The poor access to general food and nutrition, bad sanitary condition, unhealthy housing and poor access to safe drinking water are responsible factors for morbidity and mortality among tribals. Besides, cursory visit of health personnel to these villages, poor public health and medical care institutional services and impoverishment to afford health care consultancy and medicine cost of private health care referral services has further aggravated their health condition. In the absence of allopathic health care system, they are customarily dependant on traditional medical practices and practitioners.

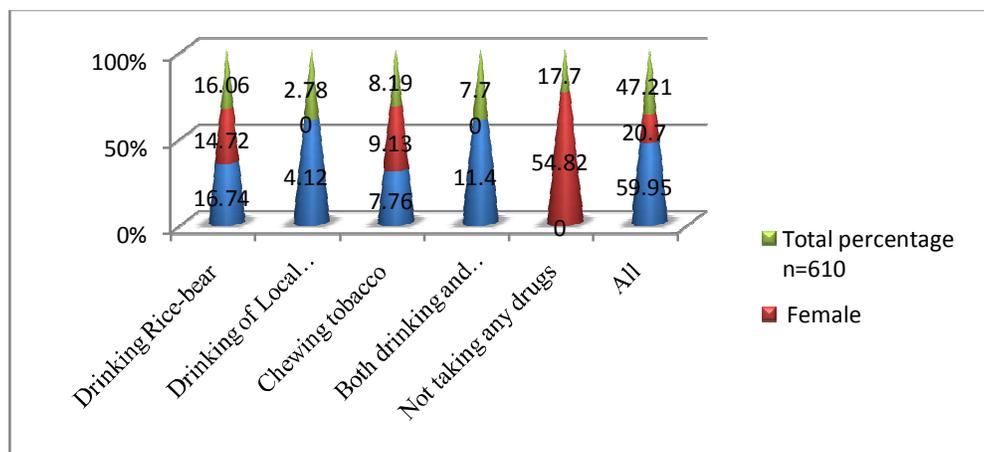


Graph 2. Types of Diseases among Tribals

Source: Field Data, *Note- Figures in parenthesis shows to the total

Livelihood of Tribals

Tribals in these villages are still following a culturally livelihood style and their dress code, food habits, songs, languages and drinking habits are different from the general population of the state. The various locally and culturally drinking habits found among them are rice-bear (*Hadia*) and mahuli bear (*Desi daru*), these are local and specific to tribal people; and also local tobacco. 54.26 percent of tribal male and 20.70 percent of tribal female have local drinking habits. Both male and female drink and dance during their local festivals. They are largely Christians. They celebrate different types of festival like; Karama, Jitiya, Sarhul, Dhela puja (*Agricultural festival- before bowing of seeds in the field*), Pousha punei (*Agricultural festival-cutting of crops*), etc. As Christian, they celebrate festival like; Christmas, Ester and all. Thus their livelihood style is based on and a pleading of tribal culture and Christianity believes and values. Agriculture, hunting, food gathering and forest product collection and sell are their main sources livelihood, conventionally existing over a long period. It can be remarked that in regard to developmental economist W.W. Rostow’s five stages of development, these tribals are still in the first stage that is in traditional society, even after more than six decades of Indian independence. They are far away from the shadow of modernization and globalization.



Graph 3. Basic drinking habits of tribals:

Source: Field data, *Note: Figures in parenthesis shows to the total

Poverty and Food security

A colossal 88 percent of tribal households residing in these naxalite prone villages are below poverty line. 54.32 percent of tribal families even survive with one square meal a day. Their per capita income is so low that majority of them cannot afford two square meal a day. Therefore, malnutrition is severe among these tribals. Neither they have nor can they afford nutrition food and the protein. They rarely consume fish, egg, meat, milk and only seen having them during festival or when they have some additional income. This reveals that a colossal number of them are below the level of sustainable livelihood. Food security in general and nutritional security in particular is in a deplorable state in naxalite prone villages. This may be one of the reasons for revolt against the feudal system and state establishments.

Table 3. Types of families and Food security

<i>Sl. No</i>	<i>Types of families PDS card holder</i>	<i>Number and Percentage (n=235)</i>
1.	APL Families	33 (12.0%)
2.	BPL families	202 (88.0%)
<i>Sl. No</i>	<i>Food consumption pattern of population</i>	<i>Number and Percentage (n=705)</i>
1.	Less than one squire meal per-day for major part of the year	383 (54.32%)
2.	Normally one squire meal per-day but less than one squire meal occasionally	249 (35.31%)
3.	One squire meal per-day throughout the year	43 (6.09%)
4.	Two squire meal per-day with occasionally shortage	30 (4.25%)
5.	Enough food throughout the year	Nil

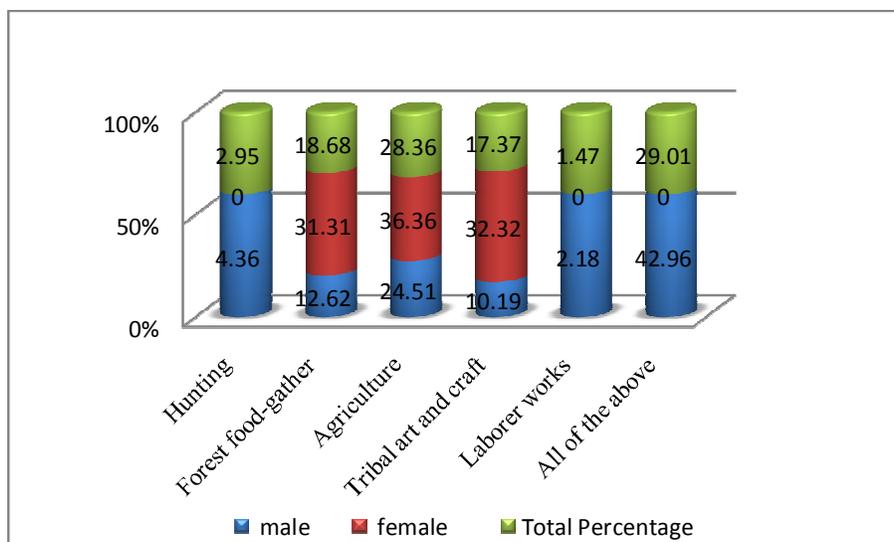
Source: Field data

*Note: APL- Average Poverty line; BPL- Blow Poverty line (Calculated)

*Note: Figures in parenthesis shows to the total

Workforce Participation

Forests offer vast potential for poverty reduction and promote sustainable livelihood of the forest fringe communities. In India it is found a very high rate of participation in forest extraction and forest income contributing 49% of the total household income, of which 56% comes from the NTFPs and 51% as cash component (Cavendish, 2003). It is observed that the forest income increases with an increase in total income and the elasticity of forest income with respect to total income is close to unity (Valdeld, 2004). Though land and land resources are central to the livelihoods of tribal people, they have poor access to land and forests (Kumar and Chaoudhary, 2005). Ecosystem services are essential for human well-being and one of the significant contributions to well-being and livelihood through environmental income (Vadeld, 2004).



Graph 4. Different types of Occupation among Tribals

Source: Field data, *Note: Figures in parenthesis shows to the total

The main sources of livelihood and occupation of tribal living in these naxalite prone villages are hunting, forest food gathering, agriculture and income from tribal art and craft. Agriculture is the primary occupation providing life sustaining and sustainable livelihood to these tribal communities in naxalite prone villages. However, a colossal 68.93 percent of households are the marginal landowners or the below subsistent landowners. Given that land is the most important sources of livelihood, the extremely low landholdings could be an important factor behind their extreme poverty as a social group (Kumar and Chaudhary, 2005). In these paltry lands they grow different crops i.e. paddy, millet potato, mustard oil and peanuts. They also grow vegetable in the backyards of their houses to supplement their meal with vegetable curry. Land is the only live saving device for these tribal communities; however, the meagre landholding is hardly a solution to subsistence livelihood. The income of tribal people residing in these villages is very meagre and even outrageous to compare with any other community living in the country side. A colossal 66 percent of them earn a paltry income of rupees Rs. 100 to Rs. 300 hundred in a month (\$ 2 to \$6 in a month), which is even far lower than an ordinary launch of an urban middle class family in urban area. Only 3.82 percent of tribal families in these villages earn a monthly income between Rs. 1000-1200. The income is paltry and too meagre for even a live sustaining subsistence level of living.

These poor and simple tribals hardly use any new technology in agriculture. They use bullock and other traditional methods or in other words, agriculture is in the primitive stage in these tribal villages. Because of poor income from agriculture, a majority of tribals have to depend on income from selling of forest products and menial labour activities. These forest products and menial labour activities act as ventilators for the subsistence livelihood. In other words, due to marginal and very marginal land holdings and primitive method of cultivation, resulting in low productivity, most household eke out a living by diversifying their pattern of occupation and no single occupation provide them sufficient income to ensure a sustainable livelihood for these tribals. In other words, they are occupation less and their occupation can hardly be numerically quantified with certainty.

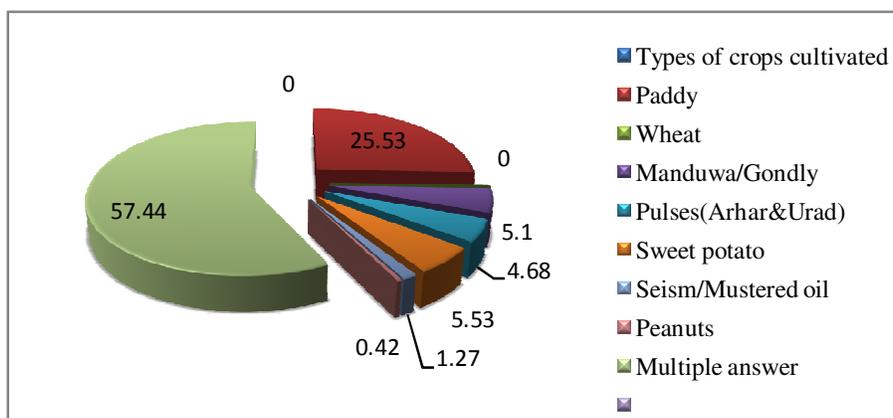
Land Holding of House Hold

Table 4. Agricultural Landholdings

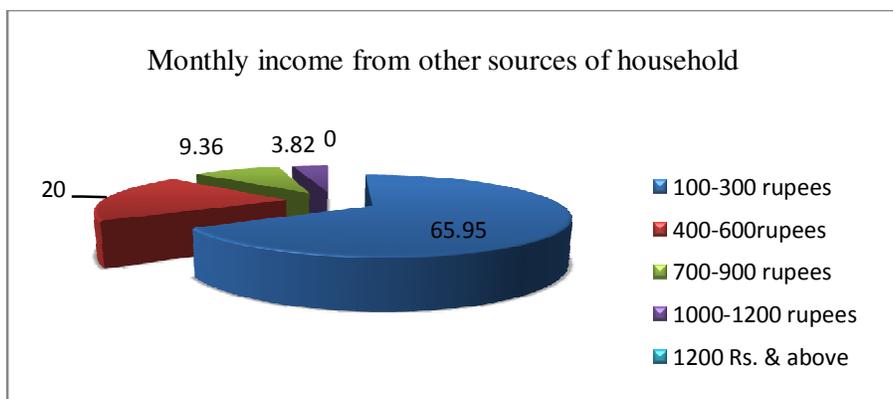
Sl.No.	Total agricultural land		Number and Percentage
	Total landholding [Irrigated land and Non-irrigated land]		
1.	Nil	Operating no land of area 0.002 hac. Or less	Nil
2.	Marginal land holding	0.002-1.00 hac.	162 (68.93%)
3.	Small land holding	1.01-2.00 hac.	44 (18.72%)
4.	Semi-medium land holding	2.01- 4 hac.	21 (8.93%)
5.	Medium land holding	4.01- 10.00 hac.	8 (3.40%)
6.	Large land holding	Larger than 10.00 hac.	Nil

Source: Field data, *Note: Figures in parenthesis shows to the total

Types of Food-crops Cultivated from the Agriculture Land



Graph 5. Types Food-crops cultivated by Tribals



Graph 6. Approximately monthly income of households

Source: Field data, *Note: Figures in parenthesis shows to the total

Table 5. Income from the Forest Products

<i>Income from Forest products</i>	<i>Total number of household</i>	<i>Quantity produced in a year</i>	<i>Value (Rupees@)</i>	<i>Total amount from the forest product in (Rupees@)</i>
<i>Sal leaf (per bundle)</i>	26	10 quintal	12Rs. ×5quintal	60 Rs
<i>Sal seed (per kg)</i>	17	5 quintal	3 Rs. ×25quintal	75Rs.
<i>Kendu Leaf (per bundle)</i>	31	20 quintal	15 Rs. ×7 bundle	105Rs.
<i>Mahul flower (per kg)</i>	40	25 kg.	10 Rs.×100kg	1000Rs.
<i>Wild-broom (1pice)</i>	9	Not fixed	15 Rs.×30 piece	450Rs.
<i>Dead fuel-wood (per bundle)</i>	17	Not fixed	40Rs.×25 bundle	1000 Rs.
<i>Tooth stick [Dantakathi] (per bundle)</i>	5	Not fixed	5Rs.× 40 bundle	200 Rs.
<i>Tarmarind (per kg)</i>	2	Average 5-7 kg.	8 Rs. ×7kg	56 Rs.
<i>Jhuna (per kg)</i>	1	1kg.	30 Rs.×2kg	60 Rs.
<i>Hunney (per kg)</i>	1	Average 30Rs.	30Rs.×2kg	60Rs.
<i>Total forest food-fodder collection</i>	Total household =149(63.40%)	Total number of individual engaged in collection forest product percentage 291(41.27%)		

Source: Field Data, *Note: Figures in parenthesis shows percentages to the total

Nearly 50 percent of the household particularly poorest of the poor having marginal landholding depend on the forest for their sustainable livelihood. The income from the forest product as depicted in Table-5 is also too paltry. However, the per capita income from the forest products is only a meagre Rs. 20.00 per month. This paltry income which they are earning by moving through the forest, they are being castigated by the forest officials and recently by Naxalites. This is also affecting their livelihood and income. The tribals in naxalite prone villages are really living in a sordid condition and leading a secluded, impoverished and sub-human lifestyle and are deprived of basic human rights.

CONCLUSION

The socio-economic conditions of the tribal people residing in naxalite prone villages clearly indicate that the naxalism is an upshot of deprivation. It can be unmistakably said that there is prevalence of naxalism in these areas because there is no development. Underdevelopment, traditionalism and physical detachment from the mainstream has promoted growth of naxalism in these areas. From this study it can be concluded that socio-economic backwardness and persistent deprivation of human rights has given rise to naxalism in these villages, where one outsider cannot really distinguish who is a naxalite and who is not. As it is a social, cultural and economic problem, inherent to the tribal society, it should be resolved through social and economic anesthesia. As it is a peoples' revolution, people can only control and finish it. The ten year of terrorism in Punjab was put to an end only when the people of Punjab provided full cooperation to the state apparatus and police. As it is difficult

to distinguish a common youth and a naxalite, therefore, cooperation common people and particularly youth is sine-qua-non for crushing naxalism. The anthropology, sociology, psychology and economics of tribal areas must be astutely studied before finding any solution to the problem. One should ponder that, why these simple and indigenous people resort to arm?; what promoted them to do so? And how they are doing it? A blind way a suppressing it by applying force would lead to more resentment and may result in a mass revolution among tribals in these affected areas. Development is a pertinent answer to naxalite problem and people belonging to naxalite prone areas required to be brought to the mainstream of development. While formulating a strategy for development all sections i.e. State apparatus, NGOs, civil society organizations, tribals and naxals be involved. Education in general and higher education in particular is key to development. Through the special education drive, the tertiary education needs to be promoted among the tribals. The infrastructural and institutional provisions such as, schools and colleges, referral hospitals, fair-weather road, electricity, irrigation facilities and small-scale and cottage industries required to be setup in these areas. The effective implementation of rural development programmes on housing, sanitation, drinking water, education, health and public distribution system and employment and skill and income generating activities in these villages will go a long way to improve their livelihood condition. While implementing all these programmes, the sentiment of tribals and their opinion leaders must be respected. Last but not the least, public participation and not the public seclusion is the answer to participatory tribal development.

NOTE:

1. Mentioned in the Naxal Terror Watch, Tuesday, July 28, 2009; “Naxals in Orissa oppose development prospects”, said Defense Expert Nihar Nayak. See <http://naxalwatch.blogspot.in/2009/07/naxals-in-or> (retrieved on 5/08/2013).
2. An Oriya Voice a daily News paper has pointed-out that half of Orissa under Naxal threat and Mass poverty is only responsible factor (Wednesday, March 19, 2008).

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