

Consumption Pattern of Tribals- A Study in Seetampeta Mandal, Srikakulam District

K.Venugopal¹ and L. Vijay Kumar²

1. Faculty Member, Dept. of Management Studies, Aditya Institute of Technology & Management, Tekkali, Srikakulam
2. Faculty Member, Dept. of Mathematics, Dr.B.R.Ambedkar University, Srikakulam

The term “Scheduled tribe” first appeared in the Constitution of India. Article 366 (25) defines Scheduled tribes as “such tribes or tribal communities or parts of groups within such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 to be scheduled tribes for the purpose of this Constitution”. Article 342 prescribes the procedure to be followed in the matter of specification of scheduled tribes.

The criteria followed for specification of a community as a scheduled tribe is

- a) Indications of primitive traits,
- b) Distinctive culture,
- c) Geographical isolation,
- d) Shyness of contact with the community at large, and
- e) Backwardness.

This criteria is not spelt out in the Constitution but has become well established. It takes into account the definitions in the 1931 census, the reports of the first backward classes commission (kalelkar), 1955, the Advisory Committee on Revision of SC/ST lists (Lokur Committee), 1965 and the Joint Committee of Parliament on the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment) Bill, 1967 Chanda Committee, 1969.

The tribals constitute 8.2 percent of total population of India. Though they are called by different names in different parts of the country, they have in

common, many socio-economic and cultural characteristic features. In the graded socio-economic inequal structure of Indian society, the tribals are at the lowest rung and being poor, lead a substandard and subsistence living. The traders, money lenders, contractors, etc; sordidly exploit the tribals as the latter are innocent and illiterate. Tribal’s perpetual indebtedness and alienation of lands aggravated their misery and inflicted their peace and happiness. Tribal revolts in the pre and post independent India have their roots in the inhuman exploitation of tribals.

Tribals in Andhra Pradesh

The State Government of Andhra Pradesh has played a pioneering role in the development of its tribals who constitute 6.6 per cent of the State population by the establishment of Girijan Co-operative Corporation in 1956 with the prime objective of uplifting the tribals through marketing and credit activities. Efficiency in the marketing function of the Corporation is sine-qua-non of the magnitude of economic benefits to tribals. Finance function is one of the determinants of the efficient performance of marketing function. Efficient management of marketing and finance is of paramount important if the Corporation is to function successfully in attainment of its goals being the maximum benefit to maximum number of tribals.

Tribal economy and its marketing features

The tribals of India are often referred to as Vanajati, Vanavasi, Pahari, Adimjati and Anusuchit Janajati. All these different names denote them as castes of forests, inhabitants of forests, hill dwellers, original communities first settlers, folk people, primitive people or scheduled tribes respectively. Among all these terms, Adivasi is known most extensively and Anusuchit Janjathi or scheduled tribe is the constitutional name covering all the names.

The largest concentration of tribal people in the entire world next to Africa is in India. Tribals in India form the very segment of the weaker sections of the society with their traditional skills and resources. They live in remote and exclusive areas in the forests, on the hill-slopes and plateaus and generally in areas with poor natural resource endowment. This isolation has deprived them out of the fruits of scientific and technological advances on one hand and it has led to their distinctive life-style, cultures and languages on the other hand. Age-old exploitation and repression of tribals by the heartless moneylenders and other rested interests in different spheres of economic activities particularly in the field of credit and marketing have cut them off from the mainstream of socio-economic development of the country over the decades. Due to this, the protection has been envisaged under the Constitution of India to the tribals by the Government of India. As a policy, Govt of India emphasized various steps which prevent alienation of tribals land, ensure fairness in marketing transactions of sale and purchase, avoid cheating by money lenders, liquor-vendors, Contractors etc., by building strong and sound infrastructural facilities in the tribal areas during the plan period.

The glaring features of the tribal economy are the traditional type of agriculture, high rate of illiteracy, inaccessibility to road, low and primitive type of technology, and very low rate of per capita income. The tribals generally grow food crops and the produce is mainly used for domestic consumption. In majority of the cases, the agricultural output is hardly sufficient to sustain the tribal household through out the year. However a marginal quantity of agricultural producer oozes itself into the market, not because there is marketable surplus, but because of their necessity either in lieu of loans taken from the traders in the previous years, or to meet the immediate hard pressing domestic needs. The produce is generally sold in the weekly shandies. Next to agriculture, the tribals draw their sustenance largely from the forests. According to the latest assessment, about 80 million hectares of land is said to be under forest lands and this works out to nearly 20 per cent of the total land area in India, and of which more than 20 per cent is inhabited by the tribals. Besides the agriculture, the tribals are accustomed to collect various items of Minor Forest Produce (M.F.P.) such as gallnut, tamarind, honey, canes, reeds, spices, oil seeds, dry fruits, lac, resins, niger seeds, karanj, kusum, harra, sal seeds, dorigums, chiraji, bamboos, medicines, medicinal items, etc., It is estimated that minor forest produce collection, processing and marketing can generate a gainful employment of 10 million persons per year.

Objectives of the study

The following are the objectives of the present study:

1. To study the socio-economic profile of the tribals of three groups viz savaras, jatapus

and gadabas selected from Seetampeta Mandal of Srikakulam District.

2. To examine the consumption patterns of the tribals and also to find out whether there are any significant variations with regard to consumption patterns among the three groups of tribals.

Hypotheses

There is a significant difference among the three categories of tribals on the consumption of cereals, pulses, vegetables, non-vegetarian food items and other consumer non-durables.

Methodology

The factors that contributed to the selection of Srikakulam district for the purpose of the study are: firstly, this is the foremost district in the State to have the thickest density of tribal population per square kilometre; secondly, this is the district in the State which has gone through a historic and violent revolt of the tribal population as a reaction against various forms of exploitation and injustice caused to them by the traders from the plains. Thirdly, this is the only district in the State where the Integrated Tribal Development Agency Programme was initially started.

The research methodology for the conduct of the present study includes the collection of data and the analysis of data using statistical tools.

The collection of data consists of data from primary sources and secondary sources. The primary data was collected through a structured schedule which consists of socio-economic profile, consumption patterns, ownership of durables held by the tribals, family buying decision making, buying habits, place of buying, and mode of buying and

miscellaneous items. The secondary data was collected through the review of literature from earlier studies, the information available at various agencies like ITDA, GCC and Non-Governmental organizations etc. The entire study is mostly based upon the primary data with the due support of the secondary sources. The primary data was collected through survey of tribal consumer respondents. The sample numbers of tribal consumer respondents are three hundred who have been selected through multi - stage sampling process and random sampling by item.

These stages of sampling procedures are

- Selection of study areas,
- Identification of respondents,
- Selection of respondents

Socio-Cultural and Religious Traits of Selected Tribes

In Seethammapeta Mandal the important tribes are Savara (Hill and plain) Jatapu and Gadaba. Savaras are one of the important Mundari speaking tribes of India, on linguistic and ethnological grounds. Savaras can be considered as pre-Aryan and pre-Dravidian. Though, there were many sub-divisions among Savaras, broadly they are treated as Konda Savara (Malia Savara) and Kapu Savara. Savaras are divided into a number of endogamous tribes. It has been noted that among sub-tribes the Konda Savara tribe have restricted themselves to the tracts of hill and jungle covered valleys. But as the plains are approached, traces of amalgamation become apparent, resulting in a hybrid race, whose appearance and manners differ but little from those of the ordinary citizens. The culture of the hill Savara is very ancient and they are considered by Government as primitive tribal groups (PTG) and the Savaras in plains are not considered as PTG in

the Srikakulam District. The researcher has observed considerable differences between Konda Savaras and plain Savaras and also they are equally numbered in tribal population of the District.

Socio-Cultural and Religious Traits of Konda Savaras

Tribal groups, most of them even today do not know how to wear the dress properly. They celebrate several festivals of which "AUAM" is an important one. Konda Savaras live in Seethammapeta agency area and in some villages of Kotturu, Bhamini, Veeraghattam, Burza, Hiramadalam and pathapatnam Mandals. In order to communicate their views freely, Konda Savaras have their own dialect called Savara language. The Savara live in parallel rows of linear huts. Each linear hut consists of number of compartments each of which houses a family. The Savara village is called gorjan. The villages are one usually homogenous settlement. In Seethammapeta hill tracts Savara villages are identified relatively isolated and mostly homogenous. In Konda Savara economy, shifting cultivation still plays an important role. Konda Savara do practice terracing, dry and wetland cultivation. Food gathering and hunting are the important subsidiary occupations. Agricultural services in Konda Savara villages are seen operating at different levels and accordingly they extend obligatory services between co-villagers, besides paid services. Within the family one can find division of labour based on sex and age. They are expert terrace cultivators and are known to grow very good varieties of bananas, turmeric and other crops on hill slopes.

Socio-Cultural Religious Traits of Kapu Savaras

The Kapu Savaras who reside in plains are said to retain many of the Savara customs. The Kapu

section are treated as denoting pallapu cultivators and considered as Savaras of the low level in their social order. The Kapu Savaras are some times called Kudunga or Baseng, a class name Kapu is referred to them because it implies that the Savaras of this class have adopted the customs of the Hindu Kapus. Savaras living in plain areas are also in different categories. Along with the name of Kapu Savara, there are other plain Savaras on the name of Bhima Savara, Tekkali Savara and Sudha Savaras. Among these entire sources Sudha Savaras are vegetarians. All these plain Savaras speak only telugu. These groups of Savaras are found in Seethammapeta, Pathapatnam, Saravakota, Hiramandalam and Mandasa Mandals. Kapu Savara are more found in surrounding mandals of Seethammapeta, Bhima Savara and Sudha Savara are living in Mandasa Mandal and they also speak in Savara language with preponderance of Oriya words. Even in plains of Seethammapeta mandal, Savara villages are identified as homogenous settlements. In villages where Savaras seem to be in living with other tribes like Jatapu and others there is ethnic segregation in such heterogeneous villages. Jatapus in such cases are given higher social position. The plain Savaras practice terracing, dry and wetland cultivation and their major occupation is cultivation. They are also adopting new agricultural technology in the irrigated areas.

Socio Cultural and Religious Traits of Jatapus

The Jatapus are defined as a civilized section of the Khonds, who speak Khonds on the hill and Telugu on the plains, and are now practically a distinct caste. They consider themselves superior to the Khonds. The name Jatapus is popularly believed to be abbreviated form of Konda Jatapu Doralu, or lords of the Khonds caste. To this caste, the old

chiefs of the palakonda Zamindars are said to have belonged. The Jatapus are a major scheduled tribe in the Srikakulam District. According to 2001 census they are 28,630 in number and the total schedule tribe population of the District is 1,51,249.

The social organization of Jatapus is based into totemic and exogamous groups of class. Among Jatapus the smallest social unit is the nuclear family, spread over by joint or extended families, modernization and new set of social forces have changed the Jatapu social system. Although the breakdown of extended families is the result of natural process of growth and phenomenon of the family units, the operation of divisible forces like wage labour and money economy has accelerated this process in the roadside villages and in semi-urban scheduled areas. Against the tradition of parental properties with the development of individualization, the adult ones began to pressurize and quarrel with their father for the division of family property. So the nuclear family has come to be the production unit in the plain areas. The parents complain that the youth of present generation are not as obedient as they used to be. The traditional behaviour of super-ordination and subordination between older and younger generation remains little affected.

Inter-Tribe Variations in Socio-Cultural and Religious Traits

The above socio-cultural and religious life pattern analysis of the selected tribes reveals, how the different tribes in Seethammampeta mandal responded to the exogenous change agents and modern forces. The Konda Savara, plain Savara and Jatapu tribes are not only popular but also are socially, culturally, ritually dominant tribes in the Srikakulam District. The comparative observation

about their socio-cultural and religious life patterns and styles reveal that Jatapu and plain Savara who are living in plains significantly responded to the change agents. The degree of change is more in Jatapu and Kapu Savaras who are residing in the surroundings of Seethammampeta and in roadside villages. However, the degree of change among these tribes is limited in the interior villages which are not having any transport or communication facilities.

The Konda Savara are also showing some degree of change but somewhat less when compared to Jatapu and plain Savara tribes. This reveals that the impact of the change in the life styles of different tribes is not uniform throughout Seethammampeta Mandal. The topography of Seethammampeta itself does not facilitate the spread of alien cultures into the hill tracts and remote interior areas. Co-existence of money economy and barter economy are still found in Konda Savara village. These tribes in the hill tracks and remote interior areas are not so much influenced by the changing agents of modernization. As these areas are far away from Seethammampeta and not easily approachable, the traditional social, cultural and religious organization of Konda Savara in their areas remained largely intact.

Music and dance is a way of life to the tribals of study area and these are important aspects of their cultural heritage. Dancing in the villages provides them opportunity for collective rejoining as well as inculcates in them a sense of cultural solidarity. The traditional patterns of music and dance of the tribes in the study are undergoing change in some aspects, mainly due to the impact of education. Music and dance is slowly becoming less popular among the educated sections of the tribal society. Also the encouragement and support from the

government legislation for the progress of tribal music and dance have inculcated a new sense of pride in their music and social ethos which play an important role. Significance of socio-cultural factors cannot be ignored in formulation of schemes for their all-round sustainable development.

The above analysis reveals that the tribes living in plains, particularly Jatapus and Savaras slowly emerged as socially and politically leading communities and dominating the tribal scenario. Even among the plain tribes due to the racial qualities Jatapu tribes are leading politically and socially. The tribes living in the hill and remote areas particularly Konda Savaras are still in back seat of the social and political system.

A study of tribal consumer behavior without studying tribal consumption pattern of various eatables and non-durables will reflect only half the story. Towards this end an attempt is made in this chapter to study their consumption pattern.

Table 1 indicates the significant difference in the consumption of cereals, pulses, vegetables, non-veritable food items and edible oil by the Savara, Jathapu and Gadaba tribal category respondents in the study area. It shows that the average consumption of cereals by Gadaba category tribals (38.12) found little higher than Savara (37.44) and Jathapu (37.22), but it is not significant because the calculated f-value is not significant. Regarding the consumption of pulses the average pertaining to Jathapu tribes (40.36) is higher than Savara (39.92) and Gadaba (39.52), and the difference in consumption is not at significant level because the f-value shows 0.140 which is less than the table value. (0.869). The average consumption of vegetables by Savara tribes (8.44) shows higher than Gadaba (8.20) and Jathapu (7.88) tribe groups but do not indicate any significant levels of difference, so the calculated f-value is 0.045. The Jathapu tribe respondents dominated in the consumption of non-vegetable items with an average of 9.44 and Gadaba and Savara are in the next position

Table – 1: Significance difference on consumption pattern of food items among tribes (in a month)

Items	Tribe category	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	f-value	Sig.
Cereals	Savara	135	37.44	1.717	0.062	2.171	0.116
	Jathapu	90	37.22	1.761	0.080		
	Gadaba	75	38.12	1.736	0.085		
	Total	300	37.59	1.738	0.043		
Pulses	Savara	135	39.92	1.836	0.072	0.140	0.869
	Jathapu	90	40.36	1.848	0.089		
	Gadaba	75	39.52	1.830	0.096		
	Total	300	39.93	1.836	0.048		
Vegetables	Savara	135	8.44	1.745	0.064	0.048	0.953

	Jathapu	90	7.88	1.759	0.080		
	Gadaba	75	8.20	1.751	0.087		
	Total	300	8.17	1.749	0.043		
Non-veg	Savara	135	9.12	1.670	0.058	0.125	0.882
	Jathapu	90	9.44	1.686	0.072		
	Gadaba	75	9.32	1.669	0.077		
	Total	300	9.29	1.672	0.039		
Edible oils	Savara	135	8.84	1.500	0.043	0.114	0.892
	Jathapu	90	8.08	1.502	0.053		
	Gadaba	75	8.28	1.503	0.058		
	Total	300	8.40	1.500	0.029		

with 9.32 and 9.12 respectively. Here also there is no significant difference found between and within the groups in the consumption pattern. The average consumption of edible oil by Jathapu tribes found higher than Gadaba and Savara groups, and the calculated f-value 0.114 is not significant because there is no much difference in their consumption.

The Savara tribe respondents dominated in the consumption of edible oils with average of 8.84 and Gadaba and Jathapu are in the next position with 8.28 and 8.08 respectively. Here also there is no significant difference found between and within the groups in the consumption pattern. The average consumption of edible oil by Jathapu tribes found higher than Gadaba and Savara groups, and the calculated f-value 0.114 is not significant because there is no much difference in their consumption.

Therefore, the consumption pattern of the above three tribe groups indicates that the Savara tribes are consuming more cereals and vegetables, Jathapu tribes are consuming more pulses and edible oil, but Gadaba tribes are consuming more non-vegetable food items. Hence, the above

analysis infers that there is no difference between and within groups of tribes in the consumption pattern of cereals, pulses, vegetables, non-vegetable food items and edible oil.

Hence, the above analysis infers that there is no significant difference between and within groups of tribe categories on the priority of consumption of cereals, pulses, vegetables, non-vegetarian food items and other consumer non-durables. Therefore, the hypothesis that there is a significant difference among different tribe category respondents on the consumption of cereals, pulses, vegetables, non-vegetarian food items and other consumer non-durables is rejected.

Table 2 analyses the significant difference in the expenditure on cereals, pulses, vegetables, non-vegetable food items and edible oil by the Savara, Jathapu and Gadaba tribal group respondents in the study area. It shows that the average expenditure on cereals by Savara category tribals (Rs 527.14) found higher than Gadaba (Rs 509.66) and Jathapu (Rs 503.04), and the calculated f-value 0.460 did not indicate any significant level because it is less than the table value. Regarding the expenditure on

pulses the average rendered by Savara tribes (Rs 294.97) is more than Jathapu (Rs 293.55) and Gadaba (Rs 287.93), and the difference in purchase is not at significant level because the f-value shows 1.422 is less than the table value. The average expenditure of Savara tribes on edible oil (Rs 29.53) found more than than Gadaba (Rs 61.21) and Jathapu (Rs 58.34) groups, and the calculated f-value 1.651 indicates no significance because there is no much difference in their consumption. The average expenditure on vegetables by Savara tribes (Rs 29.53) shows higher than Gadaba (Rs

28.09) and Jathapu (Rs 28.20) tribe groups and did not indicate any significant levels of difference, so the calculated f-value is 1.513. Whereas, the Jathapu tribe groups found more expenditure on non-vegetable food items with an average of 32.39, but the expenditure of Gadaba was Rs 32.20 and Savara was Rs 29.81 in the next position with a small difference. Here also there is no significant difference found between and within the groups in the purchase, and the f-value is observed 0.831 which is not significant.

Table – 2: Significant difference in expenditure on food items among different tribe groups

Item	Tribe category	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	f-value	Sig.
Cereals	Savara	135	527.14	3.160	17.485	0.460	0.632
	Jathapu	90	503.04	0.195	21.102		
	Gadaba	75	509.66	0.763	22.027		
	Total	300	513.28	1.372	11.483		
Pulses	Savara	135	294.97	2.588	8.227	1.422	0.187
	Jathapu	90	293.55	1.083	10.128		
	Gadaba	75	287.93	1.365	10.896		
	Total	300	292.15	1.678	5.499		
Edible oil	Savara	135	63.01	0.681	5.622	1.895	0.156
	Jathapu	90	58.34	0.598	6.415		
	Gadaba	75	61.21	1.241	8.145		
	Total	300	60.853	0.840	5.621		
Vegetables	Savara	135	29.53	0.351	8.465	1.513	0.159
	Jathapu	90	26.54	0.871	10.317		
	Gadaba	75	28.2	0.523	11.030		
	Total	300	28.09	0.581	5.621		
Non-vegetables	Savara	135	29.81	1.456	1.588	0.831	0.577

	Jathapu	90	32.39	1.725	1.974		
	Gadaba	75	32.2	1.554	2.258		
	Total	300	527.14	3.160	1.083		

Therefore, the above analysis indicates that the Savara tribe groups are dominating with their expenditure on cereals, pulses, vegetables and edible oil, but the Jathapu tribes put their more expenditure on non-vegetable food items. Hence, the above analysis infers that there is no difference between and within groups of tribes in their expenditure on cereals, pulses, vegetables, non-vegetable food items and edible oil.

References

- Belshaw, Cyrilis., (1965), "Traditional Exchange and Modern Markets", Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs.
- Bromely, R.J., (1974), "The Organisation of Quitos" Urban Markets: Towards a Reinterpretation of Periodic Central Places", Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, London.
- N.K.Behura., Nilakantha Panigrahi (2006)., 'Tribals and The Indian Constitution', Rawat Publication, New Delhi, pp 61
- Baily, F G, (1961), Tribe and Caste in India, Contributions to Indian Sociology, No v, pp 8
- Devendra Thakur., D.N.Thakur (1996), 'Tribal life in India-6, Tribal Women' Deep and Deep Publications, New Delhi, pp 1
- Government of India: Planning Commission, "Eighth Five Year Plan" pp 419-20
- Annual Report- 2006-07, Ministry of tribal Affairs, Govt. of India.
- Desmond .J, Mc Donagh .P, O' Donohue.S (2000) Counter-culture and consumer society consumption, markets and culture 207-243.
- V.S. Ramamani, (1988), 'Tribal Economy – Problems and Prospects', Chugh Publications, Allahabad, pp 164-168.
- D. Pulla Rao, (2011) Consumption Patterns of Scheduled Tribes in Andhra Pradesh: A Study of Jatapu Tribe in Seethammampeta Mandal Of Srikakulam District, Folklore Foundation, Lokaratna, Volume IV.
- Hand book of 'Action in rural technology and service', peddapeta (vill), burja (mandal), Srikakulam (dist).
- Sailaja Devi., 'Socio-Economic Conditions of Tribes', Sonali Publications, New Delhi, year 2009 Edition I.
- P.C.Jain (1999).,'Planned Development Among Tribals'.,Rawat publication,Jaipur.