



**“SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF THE CHENCHUS”
– A STUDY IN NAGARKUROOL DISTRICT OF THE TELANGANA STATE”**

**Sri. K. Jal Abhijith
Dev**

Research Scholar, Department of Economics, Kakatiya University, Warangal.

KEYWORDS :

INTRODUCTION:

India has the second largest tribal population in the world after the African continent. The total tribal population as per 2011 census in India is 10.43 crores constituting 8.6 percent of the total population of the country. There are around 700 tribal communities each with its distinctive characteristics and uniqueness. The state of Telangana has the largest concentration of tribal population among the states in south India with 32,86,926 tribals accounting for 9.34 percent of the state's population as per 2011 census. Chenchu population in the state is 14,194 spread over Nagar Kurnool, Mahabubnagar, Nalgonda, Vikarabad and Rangareddy districts. Nagar Kurnool district alone has 9272 chenchu population accounting for 65 percent of the total population in the state.

They are the first recognized PTG/PVTG in 1975 based on the recommendations of the Dhebar commission. The upper and lower plateau of Amrabad in the Nagarkurnool District and the Nallamala hills are the home of the chenchus. Several thousands of chenchus live in the upper plateau of Amrabad and are known as jungle chenchus. They are little influenced by others even today. They are mainly food gatherers and hunters. Their hair style and dress patterns are traditional. They are experts in honey collection and bamboo cutting, some of the chenchu families thrive on fishing. They are peace-loving and quiet by nature unruffled by the dynamics of modernity. They live on the collection of minor forest produce like fruits, nuts, roots and the like.

Against the background elaborated so far an attempt is made in this research paper to analyse the socio-economic conditions of the chenchus of Nagarkurnool District of the Telangana state.

METHODOLOGY:

Nagar Kurnool district which has the highest chenchu population (65 percent) in the state of Telangana is selected as the sample district. Amrabad and Lingal mandal which are the top two are chosen as the sample mandals. Jangam reddipalli from Amrabad and Appaipalli from Lingal mandal are taken as the sample villages since they are at the top in chenchu population in the respective mandals. A total of 53 respondents constitute the sample which includes 24 respondents from Jangomreddypalli and 29 from Appaipalli chosen randomly. A structured questionnaire has been administered to collect data. Simple averages and percentages are used to analyse the data obtained.

Objectives:

1. To examine the socio-demographic conditions of the chenchus in the study
2. To analyse the employment and income earning activities of the respondents.
3. To find out the hunting, fishing and honey collecting activities of the respondents
4. To offer policy related suggestions.

Analysis:

Data in the table-I shows that majority of the respondents (72 percent) are below 50 years of age as only 18 percent are above 50 years. It implies that they come under active and effective work force. Male respondents are 77 percent while females are 23 percent. All the respondents are in nuclear families and this fact indicates that the chenchus are little interested in joint families. Family members of the 53 respondents are 185 and the average size of the family is 3.5. Sex ratio in the study area is 968 and it is encouraging. All the respondents have pucca houses. More than 90 percent of the sample households have ration cards. Though all the households have electricity facility

only 21 percent have toilets. Tap and hand pump water is available to 81 percent of the households while 19 percent depend on well water for drinking. Majority of the households have fans and TVs while all the households have furniture. One third of the households have consumer durables like almirahs, mobile phones, watch/clocks and the like. A few households have bicycles and two wheelers.

Data in the table-2 reveals that 40 per cent of the respondents have agriculture as the main occupation while 45 per cent have agricultural Labour as the main occupation. It implies that 85 percent of the respondents depend on agriculture. Other occupations are of little significance. As to the secondary occupations NTFP is prominent for 57 per cent of the respondents and the next in importance is agricultural Labour. The remaining activities are of little importance. Majority of the respondents are involved in hunting animals and birds along with catching fish. Honey collection is taken up by 87 percent of the respondents. Normally, hunting, fishing and honey collection take place in groups and the catch is shared as stated by the respondents during the group discussion. It is noted that 90 percent of the respondents have own lands and 11 respondents have leased out 45.5 acres of land. Total land cultivated is 189 acres and the average land per respondent is 3.6 acres.

Figures in table-3 indicate the incomes of the respondents through major activities. Average annual income from farm cultivation is Rs 25000, from Agricultural Labour it is Rs 10,068.18. Income from non-agricultural Labour is Rs 11262.5 and from self employment average income is Rs 32500. Livestock management provides annual income of Rs 30,000 while other activities provide Rs 2,17,500. The total income of 53 respondents per annum is Rs 15,51,550 and the average income is worked out as Rs 29,274.53.

Data in table-4 shows the employment pattern under the MGNREGS and Live stock management. It is found that 49 households are involved in MGNREGS works. Average days of employment per households are 52 and the average wage rate per day is Rs 180 as mandated. Further 27 (51 percent) households in the study area are involved in Livestock management.

Major Findings:

1. Though all the households have pucca houses only 21 percent have toilets
2. Ration cards are not issued to 10 percent of the Households.
3. Consumer durables are limited in the study area
4. Agriculture and agricultural Labour are the main occupations to a majority of the households (85%).
5. Collection of MFP is the most important secondary occupation
6. Hunting, Fishing and Honey collection are taken up in groups by the respondents.
7. Average annual income of the respondent households is Rs 29,274.53 per annum.
8. A few households are not participating in MGNREGS while 51 percent in the study area are involved in Livestock management

CONCLUSION:

Government have initiated different programmes to ameliorate the living conditions of the PTGS. But they are still looking to forests for their survival. Agriculture in the tribal areas is to be made viable and the forest resources are to be promoted. Strategies are to be designed by keeping their socio-cultural values in view so that their participation can be enhanced. Live stock activities are to be encouraged as fodder is plenty in their habitations.

Table.1.Profile of the Respondents under the study area

| Slno | Age in Years | No of Respondents | Percent |
|------|--------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1 | Less than 30 | 5 | 9.43 |
| 2 | 30-40 | 21 | 39.6 |
| 3 | 41-50 | 17 | 32.0 |
| 4 | Above 50 | 10 | 18.8 |
| | Total | 53 | 100.0 |

Source: Field data

Table.1.1.Gender particulars of the Respondents under the study area

| Slno | Gender | No of Respondents | Percent |
|------|--------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1 | Male | 41 | 77.3 |
| 2 | Female | 12 | 22.6 |
| | Total | 53 | 100.0 |

Source: Field data

Table.1.2.Nature of family of the Respondents under the study area

| Slno | Type of family | No of Respondents | Percent |
|------|----------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1 | Joint | 0 | 0.0 |
| 2 | Nuclear | 53 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 53 | 100.0 |

Source: Field data

Table.1.3.Gender particulars of the family members under the study area

| Slno | Gender | No of members | Percent |
|------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| 1 | Male | 94 | 50.8 |
| 2 | Female | 91 | 49.18 |
| | Total | 185 | 100.0 |

Source: Field data

Table.1.4. Distribution of households having type of house

| Slno | Type of house | No of Respondents | Percent |
|------|---------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1 | Pucca | 53 | 100 |
| 2 | Kutchra | 0 | 0 |
| 3 | Mixed | - | - |
| | Total | 53 | 100.0 |

Source: Field data

Table.1.5. Distribution of households having ration

| Slno | Ration card | No of Respondents | Percent |
|------|--------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1 | Yes | 48 | 90.5 |
| 2 | No | 05 | 9.43 |
| | Total | 53 | 100.0 |

Source: Field data

Table.1.6. Distribution of households having facilities

| Slno | Facilities | No of Respondents | Percent |
|------|-------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1 | Having Electricity connection | 53 | 100.0 |
| 2 | Toilet | 11 | 20.75 |
| | Total | 53 | 100.0 |

Source: Field data

Table.1.7. Distribution of households having source of drinking water facility

| Slno | Source of drinking water | No of respondents | Percent |
|------|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1 | Tap water | 32 | 60.4 |
| 2 | Hand pump | 11 | 20.8 |
| 3 | Well protected | 10 | 18.9 |
| 4 | Tank | 0 | 0.0 |
| 5 | River | 0 | 0.0 |
| | Total | 53 | 100.0 |

Source: Field data

Table.1.8. Distribution of households having type of consumer durables

| SL.No. | Item | No of respondents | Percent |
|--------|-------------------------------|-------------------|---------|
| 1 | Cycle | 11 | 20.75 |
| 2 | Radio | 0 | 0.0 |
| 3 | Fan | 50 | 94.33 |
| 4 | Almirah | 20 | 37.73 |
| 5 | TV | 48 | 90.56 |
| 6 | Scooter/Motor Cycle | 9 | 16.9 |
| 7 | Watch/Clock | 21 | 39.62 |
| 8 | Furniture | 53 | 100.0 |
| 9 | Gold/silver ornaments (tulas) | 0 | 0.0 |
| 10 | Telephone/Mobile | 20 | 37.73 |
| 11 | Auto Rickshaw | 5 | 9.43 |
| 12 | Sewing machine | 1 | 1.88 |

Source: Field data

Table.2.Main occupation particulars of the respondents

| Main occupation | No of Respondents | Percent |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Own agriculture | 21 | 39.6 |
| Agricultural casual labour | 24 | 45.2 |
| Non Agricultural casual labour | 1 | 1.8 |
| Livestock management | 1 | 1.8 |
| NTFP collection | 0 | 0 |
| Hunting and gathering | 0 | 0 |
| Others | 6 | 11.3 |
| Total | 53 | 100.0 |

Source: Field data

Tab.2.1.Details of secondary occupation

| Secondary occupation | No of respondents | Percent |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Own agriculture | 01 | 1.9 |
| Agricultural casual labour | 15 | 28.3 |
| Non Agricultural casual labour | 2 | 3.8 |
| Livestock management | 0 | 0.0 |
| NTFP collection | 30 | 56.6 |
| Hunting and gathering | 0 | 0.0 |
| Others | 5 | 9.4 |
| Total | 53 | 100.0 |

Source: Field data

Table. 2.2. Traditional activities of the Respondents

| Activity | No of Respondents | Percentage |
|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| Hunting | 49 | 92.4 |
| Fishing | 32 | 60.4 |
| Honey collection | 46 | 86.8 |

Source: Field study

Table 2.3.Details of Land ownership under study area

| Slno | Details | Respondents | Acers |
|------|-----------------|-------------|-------|
| 1 | Owned land | 30(56.6) | 90.5 |
| 2 | Leased-in land | 1 | 4 |
| 3 | Land less | 23(43.4) | 0.0 |
| 4 | Leased-out-land | 11 | 45.5 |
| 5 | Land possessed | 31 | 49.0 |

Source: Field data, *Note: Figure in parenthesis shows percent

Tab.3.Annual average income of the respondents through major activity wise

| Major activity | No of respondents | Percent | Total income Rs | Average income Rs |
|---------------------|-------------------|---------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Farm cultivation | 18 | 34.0 | 450000 | 25000 |
| Agricultural labour | 22 | 41.5 | 221500 | 10068.18 |

| | | | | |
|-------------------------|----|-------|---------|----------|
| Non agricultural labour | 4 | 7.5 | 45050 | 11262.5 |
| Self employment | 1 | 1.9 | 32500 | 32500 |
| Livestock management | 5 | 9.4 | 150000 | 30000 |
| Others | 3 | 5.7 | 652500 | 217500 |
| Total | 53 | 100.0 | 1551550 | 29274.53 |

Source: Field data

Table.4.Employment in MGNREGS and Live-stock Management

| Activity | |
|--|------|
| MGNREGS participant Households | 49 |
| No participants in MGNREGS | 04 |
| Total days of employment in MGNREGS | 2548 |
| Average days of employment per household | 52 |
| Average per day wage rate in MGNREGS Rs | 180 |
| Households participated in live stock management | 27 |
| Households not participated in live stock management | 26 |

Source: Field data

REFERENCES:

1. D.Satya Narayana (2014), "Negadu" Telangana Resource centre, Hyderabad.
2. Bhowmick P.K. (1992) "Chencus of the forests and plateaus, Institute of Social Anthropology, Calcutta.
3. Mohan Rao.K (1993) " Socio Cultural Profile of Tribes of Andhra Pradesh, TCT & TI Tribal Welfare Department, Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad.
4. Subharama Raju.P and Suguna Kumari. R (2005) "Tribal Development Studies" The Associated Publishers, Dhulkot, Ambala City, Haryana, India. PP 183-198.
5. Mullu Ramanna (2011) "Economy of Primitive Tribal Groups". The Associated Publishers, Dhulkot, Ambala City, Haryana India.
6. Nageswara Rao. B and Radha Krishna .S (2015) " Primitive Tribal Groups and Demographic Trends". "Problems and Prospects of Tribal Development in India". PP 519-595 Serials Publications, New Delhi India.