



Change in Occupation from Agriculture to Non-Agricultural Sectors by the Tribal People of Mayurbhanj District, Odisha

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ABSTRACT

Being the major incumbent of Mayurbhanj District having share of 58.72% of the total population that is in the biggest district of the state of Odisha, the tribal people mainly depends on cultivation, collection of forest products, livestock rearing, casual labour jobs. But meantime the income from farming is going to be in decreasing mode for which most of the tribal people move to other places to find alternative livelihood options in lean period. The study was undertaken to find out the intensity of the occupational mobility of the tribal people of Mayurbhanj district of Odisha from the agriculture to non-agricultural activities. In the district there are four sub divisions from which one block from each sub divisions were selected randomly comprising of four blocks namely Badasahi, Khunta, Jashipur and Bahalada for the study. Five villages under each block were chosen randomly likewise twenty villages in total were taken under the study area. Purposefully six tribal people were taken as respondents with a sample size of 120 in total. The results implied that most of the tribal people had primary occupation on the agriculture (26.66%), livestock rearing (15.83%), wage earning (21.66%) and collection of forest produce (17.50%) as well as secondary occupation in that place very few were under miscellaneous activity and business sectors. But according to present occupation of the tribal people it was shown wide diversity of primary and secondary occupation engaging multifarious sectors. From the finding it was inferred that majority of the tribal people had been migrated in the summer season regularly (54.16%) which might be due to lack of livelihood option. Furthermore, it was observed that most of the respondents (38.33%) were going for other occupation regularly inside the gram panchayat area however mobility of the tribal people inside and outside state had only 15.00% and 06.00% respectively. On the basis of the study it is suggested for developing more investments and creation of basic infrastructural facilities like irrigation, market avenue storage facility, application of sophisticated techniques and expand of farm mechanization to make the agricultural sector more lucrative and profitable to check mobility from agriculture to non-agriculture sector of the tribal people. It is also suggested to improve educational status, skills, entrepreneurship spirit, swift credit linkage among tribal people through to attract more people in the agriculture and allied sector.

Keywords: Agriculture, Change, Intensity, Occupation, Primary hereditary occupation, Secondary occupation, Tribe.

INTRODUCTION

Mayurbhanj District is the largest district of the state of Odisha in which tribal population occupy a major share *i.e.* 58.72% of the total population. Their primary occupation mainly depends on cultivation, collection of forest products, livestock rearing, casual labour jobs. However, the income from farming is going to be in decreasing mode owing to poor water management, old practices, less use of machineries/implements and fragmented land

holdings. For that reason, most of the tribal people move to other places to find alternative livelihood options in lean period. Most of the farmers adopt only monocropping that is also in kharif season. They usually engaged in non-farming activities like masonry work, brick making and small industrial labours etc. The present study was conducted to find out the intensity of the occupational mobility of the tribal people of Mayurbhanj district of Odisha from the agriculture to non-agricultural activities.

Table 1. Socio-economic status of the respondents (n=120)

Sr. No.	Socio-Economic traits	Frequency	Average
A	Age		
1	Young (18-35 yr)	67	55.83
2	Middle (36-60 yr)	32	26.67
3	Old (more than 60 yr)	21	17.50
B	Educational Status		
1	Illiterate	26	21.67
2	Under Matric	45	37.50
3	Matriculation	34	28.33
4	Graduation	8	06.67
5	Post-Graduation and above	7	05.83
C	Yearly Family Income		
1	More than 1 lakh	11	09.67
2	50,000-1 lakh	28	23.33
3	20,000-50,000	27	22.50
4	Less than 20,000	54	45.00
D	Family type		
1	Joint	73	60.83
2	Nuclear	47	39.17
E	Family size		
1	Above 8	19	15.83
2	Within 5-8	68	56.67
3	Below 5	33	27.50
F	Agricultural implements Possession		
1	Country plough/ M.B. plough	103	85.83
2	Tractor/ Power tiller/Rotavator	45	37.50
3	Power sprayer/ Sprayer	29	24.16
4	Reaper/ Thresher	18	15.00
5	Seed drill	13	10.83
6	Bore well	62	51.67

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The domain of study area was confined to Mayurbhanj district in the state of Odisha having dominance of tribal people in which they occupy more than half of the total population of the district. In the district there are four sub divisions from which one block from each sub divisions were selected randomly comprising of four blocks namely Badasahi, Khunta, Jashipur and Bahalada for the study. Five villages under each block were chosen randomly likewise twenty villages in total were taken under the study area. Purposefully six tribal people were taken as respondents with a sample size of 120 in total. A pre tested structured interview schedule was prepared for collecting the data which was then analysed by using standard statistical formula.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As per analysis of the socio-economic status of the respondents, it was analysed from the above table that most of the respondents (55.83 %) belonged to

young age group (between 18- 35 years). With respect to the educational status, it was indicated as majority had qualification of below matriculation (37.50%) as well as annual family income in the category less than 20,000/- (45.00%). It was indicated from the table that most of the respondents belonged to joint family (60.83%) which was might be because of most of the tribal people preferred to live with the parents as per their traditional social system having family members between 5 to 8 numbers (56.67%). It was noticed that most of the respondents did not possess the costly agricultural machineries like tractor, power tiller, sprayer etc. whereas majority of the respondents possess traditional implements like country plough/mould board plough (85.83%). In terms of the social behaviour of the respondents, it was implicated from the study they had very much association at the village and block level organizations and officials however very poor linkage with the state and national level offices. Although some access with the non-government organization and private bodies were there might be due to their presence at grass root level. Kaur

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Table 2. Social Behaviour of the respondents (n=120)

Sr. No.	Type of Behaviour	Level of Involvement			
		Most times	Some times	Rarely	Not at all
		Frequency	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency
A	Social participation				
1	Panchayat level organisation	48 (40.00)	37 (30.83)	29 (24.16)	06 (05.00)
2	Block level organisation	19 (15.83)	44 (36.66)	62 (51.66)	34 (28.33)
3	District level organisation	07 (05.83)	21 (17.50)	39 (32.50)	53 (44.16)
4	State/National level organisation	02 (01.66)	13 (10.83)	32 (26.66)	73 (60.83)
B	Cosmopolitaness				
1	Up to Block level office	33 (27.50)	38 (31.66)	45 (37.50)	04 (03.33)
2	Up to District level office	07 (05.83)	18 (15.00)	40 (33.33)	55 (45.83)
3	Up to State/ National level office	03 (02.50)	17 (14.16)	31 (25.83)	69 (57.50)
C	Extension Contact				
1	Village level personnel	15 (12.50)	34 (28.33)	51 (42.50)	20 (16.66)
2	Block level personnel	04 (03.33)	16 (13.33)	35 (29.16)	65 (54.16)
4	District level personnel	05 (04.16)	11 (09.16)	23 (19.16)	81 (67.50)
5	State/National level personnel	08 (06.66)	15 (12.50)	31 (25.83)	66 (55.00)
6	NGO/Private organizations personnel	12 (10.00)	20 (16.66)	37 (30.83)	51 (42.50)

*Figures shown in the parentheses indicates the percentage

Table 3. Traditional hereditary occupation of the tribal people (n=120)

Sr. No.	Sector	Primary		Secondary	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%
1	Agriculture	32	26.66	25	20.83
2	Livestock rearing	19	15.83	29	24.16
3	Fishing activity	03	02.50	11	09.16
4	Wage Earning	26	21.66	34	28.33
5	Collection of forest produces	21	17.50	16	13.33
6	Bonded Labour	14	11.66	02	01.66
7	Business	0	0	0	0
8	Other Miscellaneous activity	05	04.16	03	02.50

et al (2025) studied the factors those are contributing child labour in which he stated the personal factors like financial needs and drinking habit of pedigree including uncertain income and debt of the family forcing them for labour work at early childhood stage. In addition to this big family size is also responsible for child labour and migration. According to study by Bhuyan (2023), Lodha are the primitive tribe of Mayurbhanj district of Odisha having low socio-economic condition. They have scarcity of nutrition in their diet facing imbalance in health which reflects in

socio-economic condition. On intergenerational occupational mobility from farming to the non-agricultural activity, Emran and Shilpi (2010) using survey data from Nepal revealed that there was a partial correlation in non-agricultural engagement between the father and a son whereas partial correlation was much stronger in occupation choice between mother and daughter. The non-farm involvement of mother played a causal role in daughter's choice might be cause of cultural inheritance.

Table 4. Engagement at present occupations by the tribal people (n=120)

Sr. No.	Field	Primary		Secondary	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%
1	Agriculture	19	15.83	22	18.33
2	Livestock farming	17	14.16	18	15.00
3	Pisciculture	10	08.33	13	10.83
4	Collection and value addition of forest produces	06	05.00	02	01.66
5	Salaried (Govt Sector)	05	04.16	0	0
6	Salaried (Private/NGO/Industry)	14	11.66	0	0
7	Own Business Activity	11	09.16	03	02.50
8	Political activity	08	06.66	07	05.83
9	Contract Work	04	03.33	13	10.83
10	Skilled Labour	07	05.83	05	04.16
11	Wage Earner	16	13.33	23	19.16
12	Other Miscellaneous activity	03	02.50	14	11.66

Table 5. Mobility of the tribal people to different areas (n=120)

Sr. No.	Area	Intensity of mobility					
		Regularly		Occasionally		Not at all	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
1	Inside Gram Panchayat	46	38.33	41	34.16	33	27.50
2	Inside Block	29	24.16	67	55.83	24	20.00
3	Inside District	19	15.83	38	31.66	63	52.00
4	Inside State	18	15.00	24	20.00	78	65.00
5	Outside State	08	06.66	19	15.83	93	77.50

Table 6. Mobility of the tribal people according to seasonal calendar (n=120)

Sr. No.	Season	Intensity of mobility					
		Regularly		Occasionally		Not at all	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
1	Summer (Mar- May)	65	54.16	34	28.33	21	17.50
2	Rainy (Jun- Oct)	12	10.00	27	22.50	81	67.50
3	Winter (Nov- Dec)	43	35.83	41	34.16	36	30.00

In reference to traditional hereditary occupation of tribal people, the finding from the study suggested as most of the tribal people had primary occupation on the agriculture (26.66%), livestock rearing (15.83%), wage earning (21.66%) and collection of forest produce (17.50%) as well as secondary occupation which is also confirms with the literature analysis. Very few were in miscellaneous activity and business sectors. Balakrishna *et al* (2023)

conducted study in North coastal Andhra Pradesh in Srikakulam district on the theme of livelihood of women in which he found tribal and women in rural pockets have livelihood option of back yard poultry farming in which they mainly dependant on indigenous poultry birds having less growth rate and food conversion ratio. Baruah *et al* (2024) in his finding on poultry farming of tribal people in two districts of Arunachal Pradesh revealed that although agriculture

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is the main occupation of villagers of these areas, but also, they practice livestock and poultry farming as their concurrent livelihood support.

With respect to the distribution of present occupation of the tribal people, it was observed from the table 3 that there was wide diversity of primary and secondary occupation among them which implied the occupational mobility in terms of time and situation which might be due to changes in civilization, education and social structure. The table 4 indicated that among the tribal people, most of the respondents (38.33%) were going for other occupation regularly inside the gram panchayat area however mobility of the tribal people inside and outside state had only 15.00% and 06.00% respectively. From the study it was inferred that majority of the tribal people had been migrated in the summer season regularly (54.16%) which might be due to lack of livelihood option in the locality in absence of irrigation potential and other contract jobs like MGNREGA, construction sector or industrial opportunity. Singh and Meena (2023) investigated club performance on diversification in agriculture and allied activities for occupation purpose in which they found that most of the respondents (36.25%) took up organic farming followed by fishery (22.50%) and livestock rearing (21.25%). Singh *et al* (2024) stated that farming was primary occupation of the tribal people of Dindori district in the state of Madhya Pradesh with medium technical orientation. Most of the respondents had small land holding and they have medium level of adoption of new technologies. In poultry farming 90% of rural farmers mainly adopt native chicken (Rath *et al*, 2015) in which meat and egg productivity are very poor owing to low potential (Singh *et al*, 2018). Motiram and Singh (2012) presented rural sector mobility was less in comparison to urban sectors mainly in low-skilled and poor salary employees. However, there was downward mobility among the SC/STs.

CONCLUSION

The tribal people mainly depend on cultivation, collection of forest products, livestock rearing, casual labour jobs from which the income is going to be in decreasing for which most of the tribal people move to other places to find alternative livelihood options in lean period. Due to non-remunerative and encouraging for the income and livelihood in the field of agriculture, it is becoming a trend to migrate to other profitable occupational sectors for the tribal people in changing scenario. On the basis of the study it is suggested for developing

more investments and creation of basic infrastructural facilities like irrigation, market avenue storage facility, application of sophisticated techniques and expansion of farm mechanisation to make the agricultural sector more lucrative and profitable to check mobility from agriculture to non-agriculture sector of the tribal people. It is also suggested to improve educational status, skills, entrepreneurship spirit, swift credit linkage among tribal people through to attract more people in the agriculture and allied sector.

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